

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 06584 378 9

GOVDOC

BRA

4221

4222

4223

4224



BOSTON  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2011 with funding from  
Boston Public Library

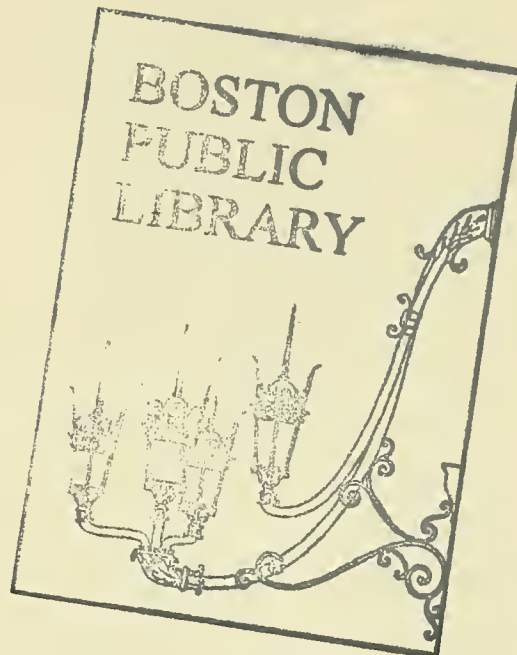




GOVDOC

BRA

4221



THOU

BRA

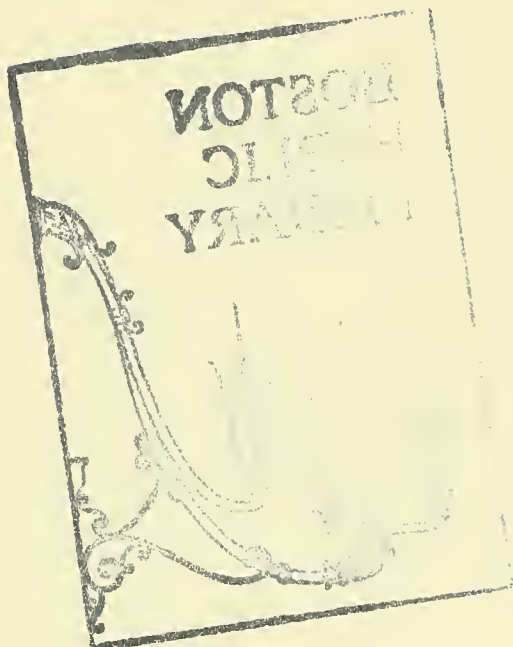
4224

Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission  
on the potential designation of  
The WILLIAM MONROE TROTTER HOUSE  
as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975

69  
14

Approved by: Marion Myers Aug 30, 1977  
Executive Director Date

Approved by: Pauline Chase Harrell Aug 30 '77  
Chairman Date



C69  
B14

## CONTENTS

- 1.0 Location of the Property
- 2.0 Description
- 3.0 Significance
- 4.0 Economic Status
- 5.0 Planning Context
- 6.0 Alternative Approaches
- 7.0 Recommendations
- 8.0 Standards and Criteria
- 9.0 Bibliography





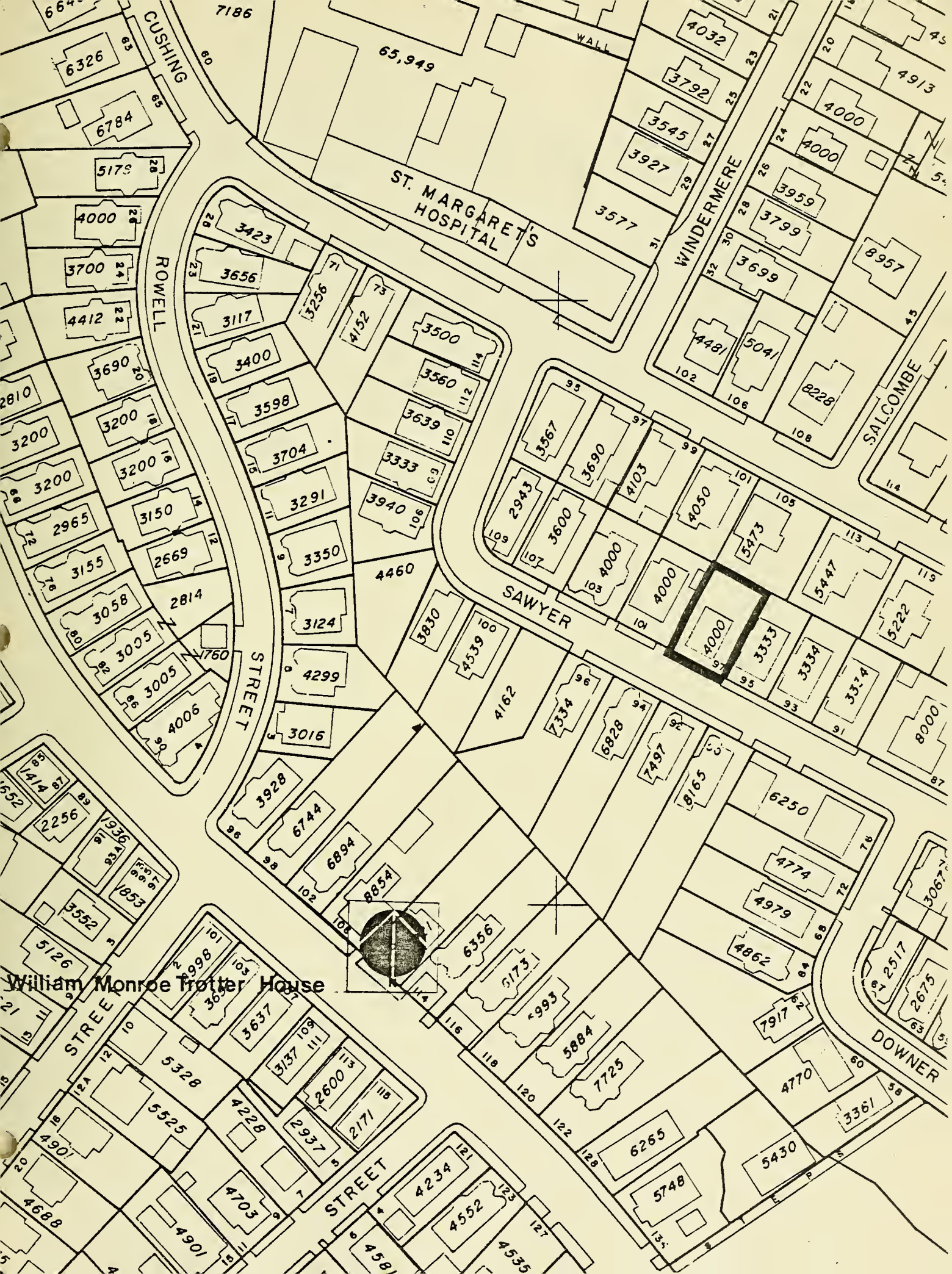


# UPHAMS CORNER

\* William Monroe Trotter House









## 1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

1.1 Address: 97 Sawyer Avenue, Dorchester, Ward 13, Precinct 9. The assessors parcel number is 22110.

1.2 Area in which the Property is located:

The property is located on Sawyer Avenue in the Jones Hill section of Dorchester, near Uphams Corner. This part of Dorchester was chiefly occupied by farm and country estates until 1875, when its development as a residential community proceeded rapidly. This hill was traversed by streets on which substantial detached frame houses were built on rather small scale lots. Towards the turn of the century, more modest, but still large sized residences, including multi-framed types, were also built. The crest of the hill is now chiefly covered by St. Margaret's Hospital.

1.3 Map showing location:

Attached.





## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

### 2.1 Types and Use:

The property which occupies less than one acre is residential in type and is currently owned by John W. and Irene N. Prantis.

### 2.2 General Description

The William Monroe Trotter House is a rectangular plan, balloon frame house built in 1893. The house is set on a foundation of coursed rubble granite, and is covered by a high gabled roof of asphalt shingle. The first floor of the house is covered with imitation brick siding, made of asphalt. Above the first floor is a moulding on all sides of the house, which provides the base for an outward curving section of the second-story wall (a detail popular in Shingle style houses of the 1880's and 1890's). Above this strip the house is covered with imitation shingles, also made of asphalt. All trim is painted white. The house has one chimney which rises through the roof's ridge at a point slightly north of the center of the building.

The south gable end of the structure is the facade. Attached to it is a two-bay by one-bay deep porch, which covers the entire width of the facade. The porch is set on brick posts, concealed by lattices, and has a stairway slightly west of center on its western bay. At the first floor the porch is supported by square wooden posts which have beveled corners above the railing level, and solid curved brackets at their tops. Set in between the posts are railings of square wooden balusters set into wooden upper and lower rails. On either side of the stairway the railings terminate with square wooden posts having turned tops with ball finials. An iron handrail extends from each of these posts to the base of the stairway at the sidewalk. Set into the wooden support posts of the porch are wooden lintels surmounted by a boxed cornice and wooden gutter, all supporting a low sloping roof of asphalt shingles (which rises from south to north). At the first floor, the facade has a door on its western half and a two over one sliding sash window on its eastern half arranged symmetrically about the center line. There are two windows in corresponding positions on the second floor, the western one being covered by a two over two pane wooden storm window. Throughout the house all windows are set in frames with moulded outer edges. All windows, unless stated otherwise, are of two over one double hung sash; all first floor windows have aluminum combination windows. The facade entrance has an oak door with glazed upper half and a solid, paneled lower half. It is protected by an aluminum combination door. There is one sash of six over one panes centered in the gable.



The east side of the house has one window at each story in its southern half (and centered within that half) and a half hexagonal two-story bay window on its northern half. The whole length of the east wall is capped by an undecorated box cornice and wooden gutter. The west wall of the house is slightly longer than the east, due to a two story ell at the rear. Two windows are set in the northern half of this wall, occurring at both stories; at the second story is a square Queen Anne window of colored glass that lights the interior stairhall. The west roof slope has a gabled dormer covered with asphalt shingles.

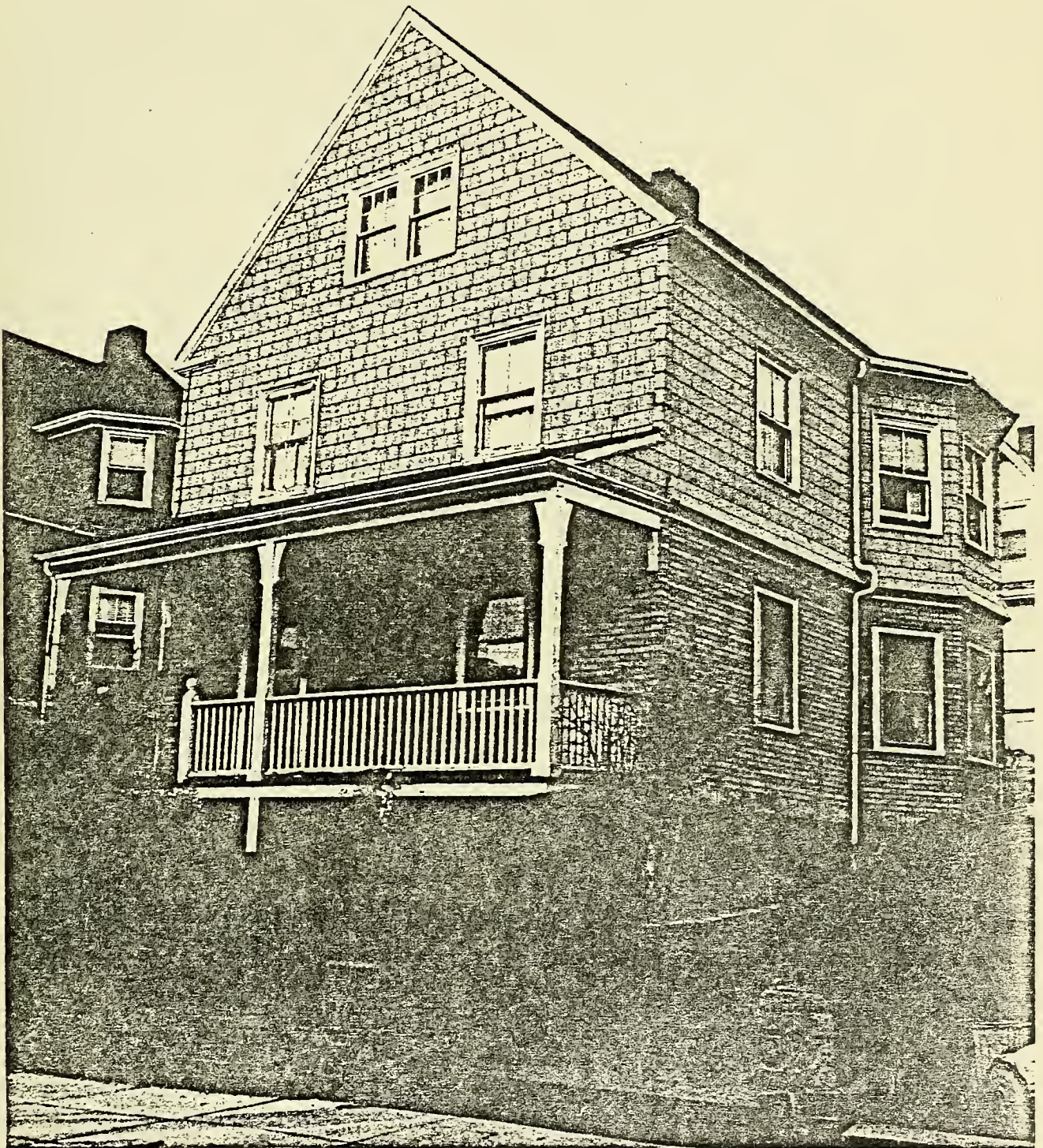
The north (rear) wall of the house has an original ell occupying the western two thirds of its first and second stories. It is covered by a low, half-hip roof of asphalt shingle which joins to the main body of the house at the sill of the attic window. The ell has a wooden door with a wooden storm door on its western half. To the east of the door, slightly off center is a narrow two over one window. At the second story, slightly westward of the door is the only storm window in the ell. Set out from the ell on brick posts, is an open rectangular porch with wooden steps at east end, next to the wall of the ell. On the other sides of the porch are railings of the same type as the front porch railings.

### 2.3 Photographs

Attached.







William Monroe Trotter House, Dorchester, Massachusetts

Photo by Brian Pheiffer for  
the ABC 1975





### 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

#### 3.1 Historic Associations

The significance of the house at 97 Sawyer Avenue lies essentially in its association with William Monroe Trotter, who owned it between 1899-1909.\* Trotter was one of the few Americans of national prominence who actively and consistently spoke out against the rising tide of American racism during the first decade of the twentieth century. His life is exemplary of his desire to bridge the gap between the ideals of the nation and its practices which compromised the rights of Black Americans.

Although his adult life was one of protest against inequality and injustice, Trotter is best remembered for his steadfast opposition to the accommodationist, Booker T. Washington. Washington was accepted and promoted by most Whites as the national Black leader of the time because his philosophy concerning the status of Black people in America supported segregationist views. Thus, Trotter and other radical leaders believed that their efforts should be directed against Washington in order to achieve racial equality.

William Montoe Trotter, born April 7, 1872, was raised in the Black elite society of Boston. After his secondary education and serving a year as a shipping clerk, Trotter entered Harvard University where he studied under such notable figures as George Herbert Palmer, George Santayana, William James and Albert Bushnell Hart. Trotter was the first Black elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard and graduated in 1895 Magna Cum Laude.

At a time when Trotter was preparing to embark upon a career in real estate and a comfortable life in Boston's upper-class Afro-American society, Blacks throughout the country were rapidly being relegated to the bottom of a caste system. Reconstruction had essentially failed, and Blacks played minor political role. The 1890's witnessed a resurgence of violence and racial animosity designed to disfranchise Blacks. The Supreme Court sanctioned the process of making Blacks second-class citizens in its infamous decision, Plessy v. Ferguson (1896). During this period Booker T. Washington was propelled to national prominence due to his urging that Blacks should forego political involvement, while concentrating on economic development through "industrial" training.

Trotter witnessed the deterioration of conditions for Blacks in the South and the spread of what he perceived as racist attitudes into the North. He viewed Washington's apparent acquiescence to the rising tide of racism as a threat to himself and the race as a whole, and became, after 1900, increasingly militant.

---

\*The text for this section has been edited from the nomination form to the National Register of Historic Places. See Bibliography.





In March 1901, Trotter helped to organize the Boston Literary and Historical Association which served as a forum for militant political opinion expressed by such notables as W.E.B. DuBois, Oswald Garrison Villard and Charles Chesnutt. Trotter also joined the more politically oriented Massachusetts Racial Protective Association.

One of Trotter's greatest contributions to Black protest came when he and his friends, George Forbes, founded The Guardian in 1901, a weekly newspaper. Most of his more virulent criticism was reserved for Booker T. Washington's accommodationist approach to race relations. Trotter strenuously objected to what he perceived as Washington's overemphasis on industrial education and the relegation of Black people to a state of serfdom. To Trotter, the franchise was a sacred right and an indispensable means for achieving power.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, a small group of Blacks expressed serious doubt about the course proposed by Booker T. Washington. Of the two main figures of opposition, Trotter in Boston and W.E.B. DuBois in Atlanta, Trotter was the more forceful and persistent as the opposition to Washington mounted. Trotter's approach was best exemplified in the confrontation which occurred in Boston on July 30, 1903. He proposed to use the occasion of a speech by Washington before the Boston Branch of the National Business League to question his program and its results. As Trotter attempted to present his question, he and his sister were arrested leaving Washington free to deliver his speech. The incident was quickly labeled the "Boston riot" and received widespread coverage. Trotter had achieved his major goal of directing national attention to the fact that there were some Blacks who disagreed with Washington and his program.

After the "riot", Trotter formed the Boston Suffrage League, which soon expanded into the New England Suffrage League. The aim of the group was to place before the American people wrongs against the claims of Blacks. Trotter was elected president. He pressed for anti-lynching legislation, the expenditure of the hundred-twenty million dollars a year on southern schools until 1925, the elimination of segregation on interstate carriers and the enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment.

In 1905 DuBois sent invitations to selected Black leaders which launched the Niagara Movement to advocate political, economical and social progress for Black Americans. The Movement was short-lived, but, it served to formalize the split with Booker T. Washington. DuBois said that it was Trotter who put the backbone in the platform of the organization.



The most enduring and successful protest organization was founded after the 1908 Springfield, Illinois riot with the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. Trotter did not join the organization because of his skepticism of a white-dominated group. He remained on the periphery of the NAACP to lend his support only on his terms.

During this period Trotter was devoting more and more time to his paper, The Guardian, and less to his business. In 1909 he lost the property which his father had left to him as well as his home in Dorchester at 97 Sawyer Avenue where he had lived since 1899.

As a political activist Trotter believed that political power resulted from the exercise of the franchise. His actions were based upon the belief that Blacks should remain politically independent, voting as a block to swing close elections to the candidates who offered the most to Black people. Although Trotter praised Theodore Roosevelt for appointing a Black man collector of customs for the Port of Charlestown, he later strongly opposed Roosevelt for his inaction concerning the problems of Black people. Trotter was horrified and outraged at the way Roosevelt handled the Brownsville incident of 1906 in which Black soldiers were summarily dismissed from the armed service without honor. Anxious to defeat both Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, Trotter turned to the Democrats in 1907 in the belief that it was better to vote for a known enemy than false friends.

During Woodrow Wilson's races for governor of New Jersey and, later, for President, Trotter and his National Independent Political League (NIPL) endorsed Wilson. With DuBois' endorsement in The Crisis, Wilson managed to draw a considerable number of Black votes from the Republican party. Later Trotter was appalled by the President's sanction of segregation in federal offices in Washington.

Concerned over the course of events in Washington, Trotter and the NIPL drafted a petition signed by 20,000 people from 36 states to present to Wilson. In November of 1913, Trotter, Ida Wells-Barnett, William Sinclair, among others, were granted a meeting with the President. Wilson received them politely but did not commit himself. A year later, Trotter again met with Wilson in which no commitment to change was made.





Trotter's remaining years were anti-climatic. He actively protested against the showing of Thomas Dixon's The Birth of a Nation. He failed to attend the Amenia Conference when invited by Joel Spingarn in 1916, although he endorsed the idea of a gathering of Black leaders.

Trotter continued to publish The Guardian and to rally to the cause of Black people, particularly Black soldiers during World War I. He maintained that Blacks would fight better in war if they could anticipate better treatment in peace. When the War ended, Trotter, in spite of a State Department ban against Blacks going to Europe for the Peace Conference, managed to get to Paris where he pleaded the cause of people of color before the nations of the world. He protested the failure to include a clause on racial justice in the Peace Treaty. He did an excellent job in educating the French, however, he received no response from President Wilson or the newly created League of Nations.

Trotter sailed home to return to what James Weldon Johnson and the media described as the "Red Summer" in 1919 as Whites took up arms against Blacks in cities throughout the nation. Trotter pleaded before the Lodge Senate Committee holding hearings on the Peace Treaty to include a clause relating to racial justice. Neither the racial justice clause nor the treaty were accepted by the Senate.

During the 1920's Trotter gave his support to the Dyer's Anti-Lynching Bill in 1922, but spoke out against Garvey's Back-To-Africa Movement. As late as 1933 he petitioned Franklin D. Roosevelt to end segregation in the District of Columbia. He died in Boston in April, 1934.



### 3.2 Architectural Significance

The Trotter House is an example of the late 19th c. Vernacular architecture that combines Queen Anne style elements with Shingle style details. It was built in 1893 for its owner, George D. Burton, and designed by J.F. and G.H. Smith as a one family for \$3,500. The builder was Chute & Bagloe. Jones Hill, on which it is located, is characterized by large frame houses built after 1890 on relatively small lots. Many of the residences were built as substantial single family mansions, (some as much as \$20,000 in cost). The later structures were more modestly styled and often multi-family, but maintained the large scale. The early occupants have been described as upper middle class of diverse national backgrounds.

### 3.3 Relationship to the Criteria for Landmark Designation

The William Monroe Trotter House clearly meets the criteria for Landmark designation established by Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 in that it is a structure which is associated significantly with the life of an outstanding historic personage. It also fulfills the definition of "Landmark" in being an improvement which has historical significance to the City, the Commonwealth, the Region and the Nation. In this case, its national significance is acknowledged by its selection by the Department of Interior as a National Historic Landmark.





#### 4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

The assessed value of the Trotter House is \$3,000 including \$1,000 for land and \$2,000 for the building.

The occupancy of the house appears to be stable. The area is zoned R.8. for three family or apartment use.



## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 5.1 Background:

Originally incorporated as a separate town in 1630, Dorchester remained essentially a farming community until the early 19th century, when it became a favored location for the country estates and summer residences of the Boston gentry seeking to escape the congestion of the City.

Following its annexation to Boston in 1870 and subsequent extension of streetcar lines, Dorchester underwent rapid residential and commercial development. New streets were laid out and large farm lots and estates were subdivided, first for single and two-family wood-frame houses in a variety of Victorian styles, and later for "triple-deckers" or three-family, wood-frame, free-standing structures with projecting window bays and porches. To this day, the great majority of the housing stock dates from the period 1870-1915, and from the period 1890-1910 for Jones Hill, in particular.

A combination of factors affecting most large cities since World War II has brought about a gradual decline, both in population and in overall maintenance conditions of the existing housing stock, along with changes in the area's sociological makeup.

### 5.2 Current Planning Issues:

In its Fall, 1976 report entitled "Dorchester District Profile and Proposed 1977-1979 Neighborhood Improvement Program", the Boston Redevelopment Authority identifies the major planning issues affecting Dorchester as housing deterioration and commercial center decline.

The decline in housing quality is due to a number of inter-related factors, which include changes in transportation systems and residence patterns, racial transisiton, bank and insurance company red-lining, and the age and deferral of repair of the houses themselves (over 40% of which need repairs in excess of \$1,000.00). Similar forces have contributed to the blighted condition of many of the area's main commercial arteries.

The City of Boston is responding to the need for neighborhood stabilization with three federally-funded programs. The Housing Improvement Program provides partial rebates for housing repairs and improvements by owner-occupants, and a HUD-funded homesteading program provides funds through the 312 loan program for rehabilitation and re-occupation of foreclosed, federally-owned properties. Finally, an Innovative Programs Grant recently received from HUD is designed to stabilize existing housing values and encourage reinvestment through the use of marketing techniques and public image improvements. In addition, an extensive public improvement program, concentrating on upgrading school facilities, street and sidewalk resurfacing, and new lighting and utilities, has been underway for about eight years.





The BRA's Storefront Improvement Program, functioning on a similar rebate plan for needed storefront improvements, supplemented by a program of pedestrian and street improvements, is designed to upgrade neighborhood commercial centers along major arteries.

The area immediately surrounding the Trotter House is fairly stable with a minor (12%) drop in population since 1940 and with almost half the population having resided there for more than five years. The Jones Hill Association has been in existence for several years and is an active civic group. There are approximately 3,500 residents, and 70% of the homes are owner occupants.

Still, there is a need to bolster neighborhood confidence and self-image, and to encourage private investment in the area which is currently zoned R-8.



## 6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

As a result of its historic associations and National Historic Landmark status, The William Monroe Trotter House clearly satisfies the criteria for Landmark designation. Such a designation would mean that future physical changes to the property would have to be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission. Landmark designation would provide a high degree of protection for this historic resource.

Architecturally and visually, the Trotter House is part of an interesting and fairly cohesive area of Jones Hill. A study committee might conclude that, in order to protect the relationship existing among the structures within that area, the Commission should designate the area in one of its district categories. However, the overriding historical significance of Mr. Trotter more appropriately places the house in the Landmark category.





## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommend that the William Monroe Trotter House be designated as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975.

The boundaries of the Landmark property should conform to the parcel of land known as assessors parcel 22110 owned at this time by John W. and Irene M. Prantis.

The standards and criteria recommended for administering the regulatory functions provided for in Chapter 772 are attached.



## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

## Boston Landmarks Commission

Per Sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for 1975), Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purposes of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation. The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers, and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them.

It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reasons for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been so structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.





It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, all of which are not under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- a) Building code conformance and safety requirements.
- b) Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems.
- c) Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels: (1) those general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (with three different categories for buildings, building interiors and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standards and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.



GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES  
DESIGNATED AS LANDMARKS by the Boston Landmarks Commission

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Imitation replacement materials are not allowed.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. New additions should be contemporary in design, not imitative of an earlier style or period.





8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered as part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. EXTERIOR WALLS

I MASONRY

1. Whenever possible, original masonry and mortar should be retained.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellant coating to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.
6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.



## II NON-MASONRY

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.
2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.

### C. ROOFS

1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
2. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, texture, and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers, brackets.

### D. WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
3. On some properties consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.





E. PORCHES, STEPS AND EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues and decorative items.

F. SIGNS, MARQUEES AND AWNINGS

1. Signs, marquees and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained and repaired where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees and awnings shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall either be contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structures being reused for purposes different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.



## G PENTHOUSES

1. The objective of preserving the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse shall be approved.
2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
  - a) Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; set-backs shall be utilized.
  - b) Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.
  - c) Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
  - d) Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

## H LANDSCAPE FEATURES

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its newer surroundings.



3. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

#### I. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. There are two aspects of exterior lighting:
  - a) Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b) Quality of illumination on building exterior.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches, as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a) Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b) Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.





- c) New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design, and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.

- 4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.

#### J. REMOVAL OF LATER ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

- 1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general guideline.
- 2. Factors that will be considered include:
  - a) Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
  - b) Historic association with the property.
  - c) Quality in the design and execution of the addition.
  - d) Functional usefulness.



Boston Landmarks Commission  
Specific Standards and Criteria

---

William Monroe Trotter House  
97 Sawyer Avenue  
Dorchester, MA

A. General

1. The designation of this property is based more on the importance of the man who owned it and lived within it than on the architectural importance of the structure. It, however, exhibits basic elements of its Queen Anne style origin in which it was built, marred mainly by the later application of new wall materials.
2. The general intent with this building should be to make no further violation of the basic integrity of the house and try gradually to restore the original details and materials.
3. As the primary public views of the house are from Sawyer Avenue, the most attention should be given to the front elevation facing south.

B. Walls

1. When any work is done on the exterior walls, the intent should be to remove the existing asphalt shingles and restore and/or replace the smooth wood clapboards or wood shingles.
2. When any exterior work is being done investigation should be made to see if the building originally had ornamental detail. If so, this should be gradually replaced.
3. Windows should not be added or removed and should only be modified to bring closer to standard Queen Anne style detailing.
4. Exterior paint or stain should match original color, if it can be determined; or, be from a typical Queen Anne style palette, if the original cannot be determined.

C. Roof

1. The roof shape should be retained.

D. Porches

1. The front porch with its detailing and lattice work should be retained.

E. Additions

1. The existing ell in the rear and its porch should be retained.





## 9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aptheker, Herbert, editor. A Documentary History of the Negro People of the United States. Vol. 11. New York: The Citadel Press, 1964.

Fox, Stephen R. The Guardian of Boston, William Monroe Trotter. New York: Atheneum, 1971.

Graves, Lynn Gomez and Fleming, John E. "William Monroe Trotter House", National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1976.

Kellogg, Charles Flint. NAACP, A History of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, vol 1, 1909-1920. Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1967.

Logan, Rayford W. The Betrayal of the Negro From Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson. New York: Collier Books, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Negro in the United States vol. 1: A History to 1945--From Slavery to Second-Class Citizenship. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1970.

Meier, August. Negro Protest Thought in America, 1800-1915. Ann Arbor: Ann Paperbacks, 1968.

Rudwick, Elliot. W.E.B. DuBois, Propagandist of the Negro Protest. New York: Atheneum, 1968.

Tucci, Douglass Shand. The Second Settlement 1875-1925: A Study on The Development of Victorian Dorchester. Boston: St. Margaret's Hospital, 1974.



Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, Inc.

The numbers book; a digest of Massachusetts financial facts.  
Boston, March 1977. (P20 M1)

Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, Inc.

State budget trends, 1969-1978. Boston, April 1977. (P20 M2)

National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year.

To form a more perfect union, justice for American Women.  
Washington, D.C., June 1976. (M70 N)

National Research Council.

Port development in the United States. Report prepared by the  
Panel on Future Port Requirement of the United States Maritime  
Transportation Research Board, Commission on Socio-technical  
Systems. Washington, D.C., National Academy of Sciences, 1976.  
(T62 N2)

Stickney, Patricia, et al.

Gaining community acceptance; A handbook for community residence  
planners. White Plains, N.Y., Community Residences Information  
Services Program, August 1976. (R11 S)

U.S. General Accounting Office.

Meeting application and review requirements for block grants  
under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.  
Washington, D.C. July 28, 1976. (M44 US 73G)

U.S. General Accounting Office.

A comparative analysis of subsidized housing costs. Staff paper  
prepared for the Subcommittee on Housing and Urban Development  
and independent agencies of the Committee on Appropriations,  
U.S. Senate. Washington, D.C., July 28, 1976. (L48 US 73 G)

Wyoming. Dept. of Economic Planning and Development.

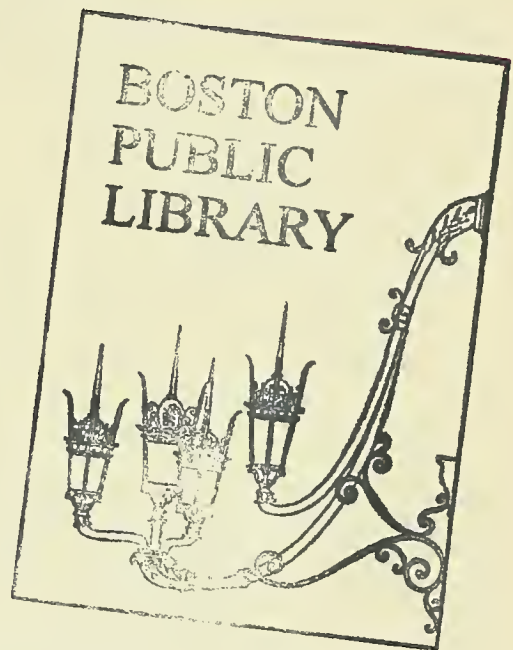
Outdoor recreation and open space planning, bibliography.  
Rev. ed. Wyoming, May 1977. (D43.1 W)



~~Property 119~~  
~~BOSTON DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY~~  
~~Library~~

GOVDOC  
BRA  
4222

Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission  
on the proposed designation of COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL  
as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975



Approved by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director

Accepted by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman



## 1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

- 1.1 Address: The Commonwealth Avenue Mall runs down the center of Commonwealth Avenue from Arlington Street to Kenmore Street, interrupted by ten street crossings.
- 1.2 Area in which the property is located: The Mall is one of the principal urban design features of Back Bay, a late 19th century landfill area containing rowhouses laid out on streets fitting a French Second Empire style grid pattern.

This part of Boston was marshes from the founding of the city until the 1820's, when a poorly engineered tidal dam created a sanitation hazard in the area. Fill of the land was ordered by the legislature in 1852, and the project, begun in 1857, reached Gravelly Point (now Kenmore Square) by 1890. Long an upper class district, Back Bay in recent years has seen changes to a largely transient and student population.

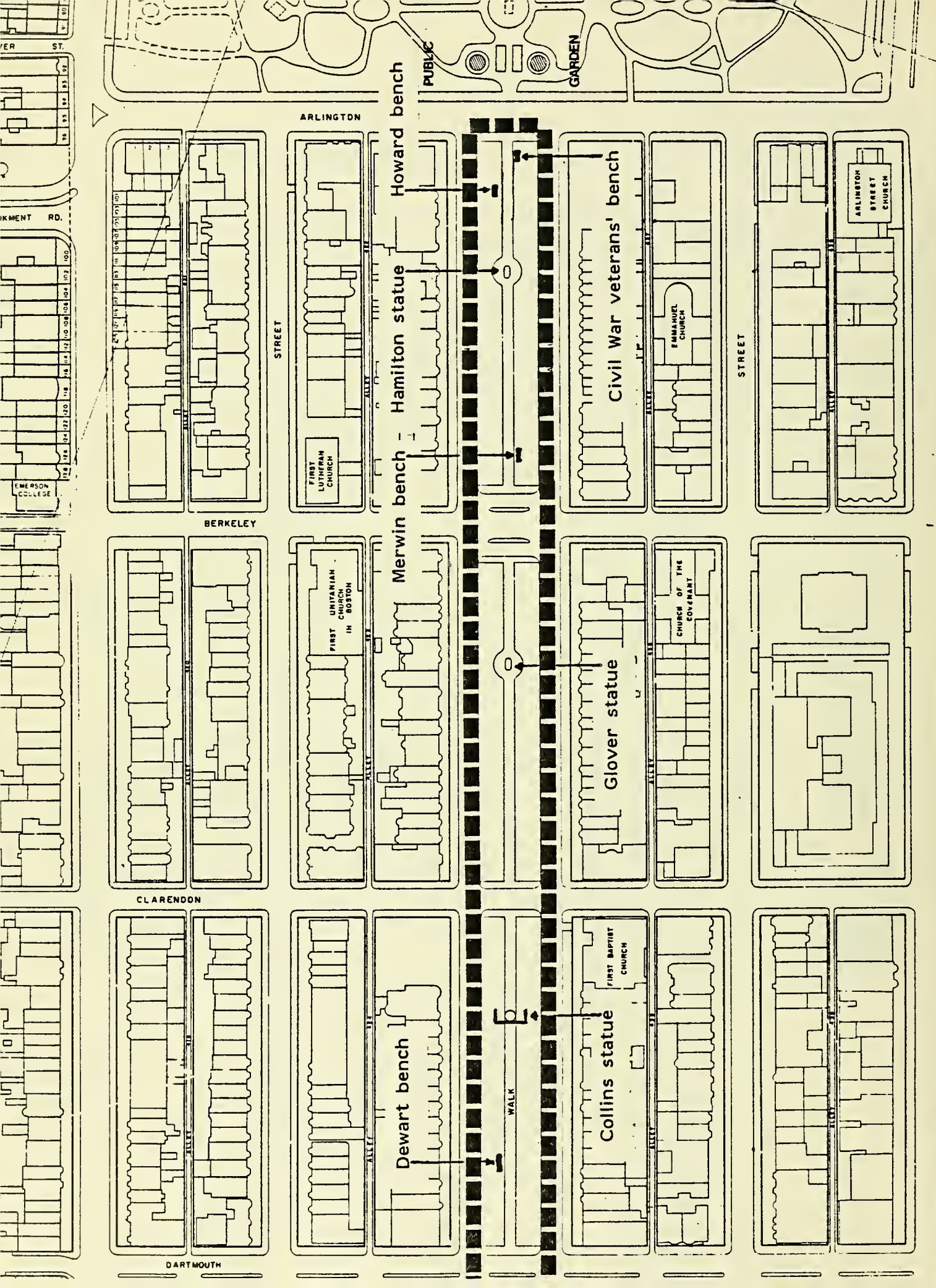
- 1.3 Map showing location: attached.

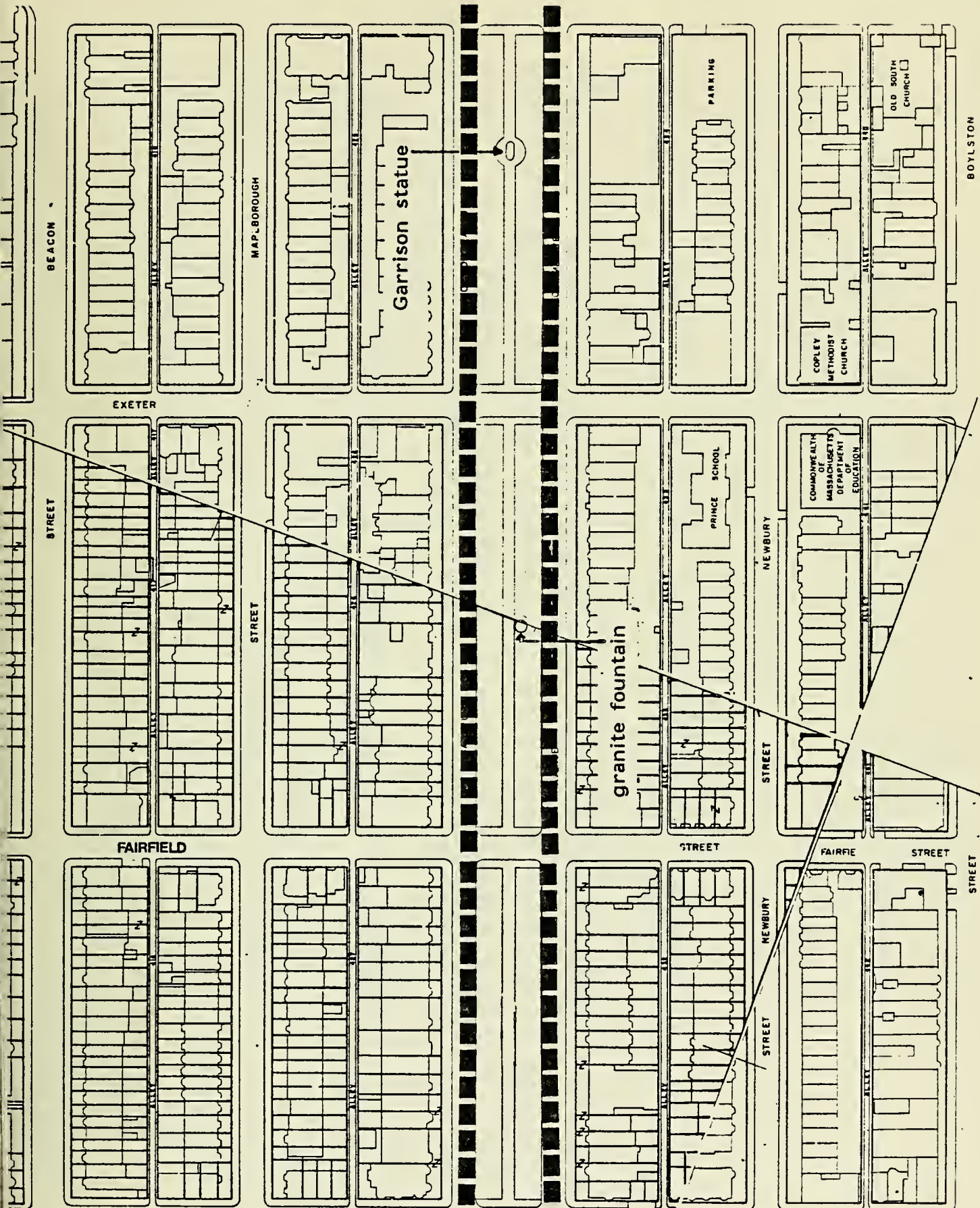


# Commonwealth Avenue Mall



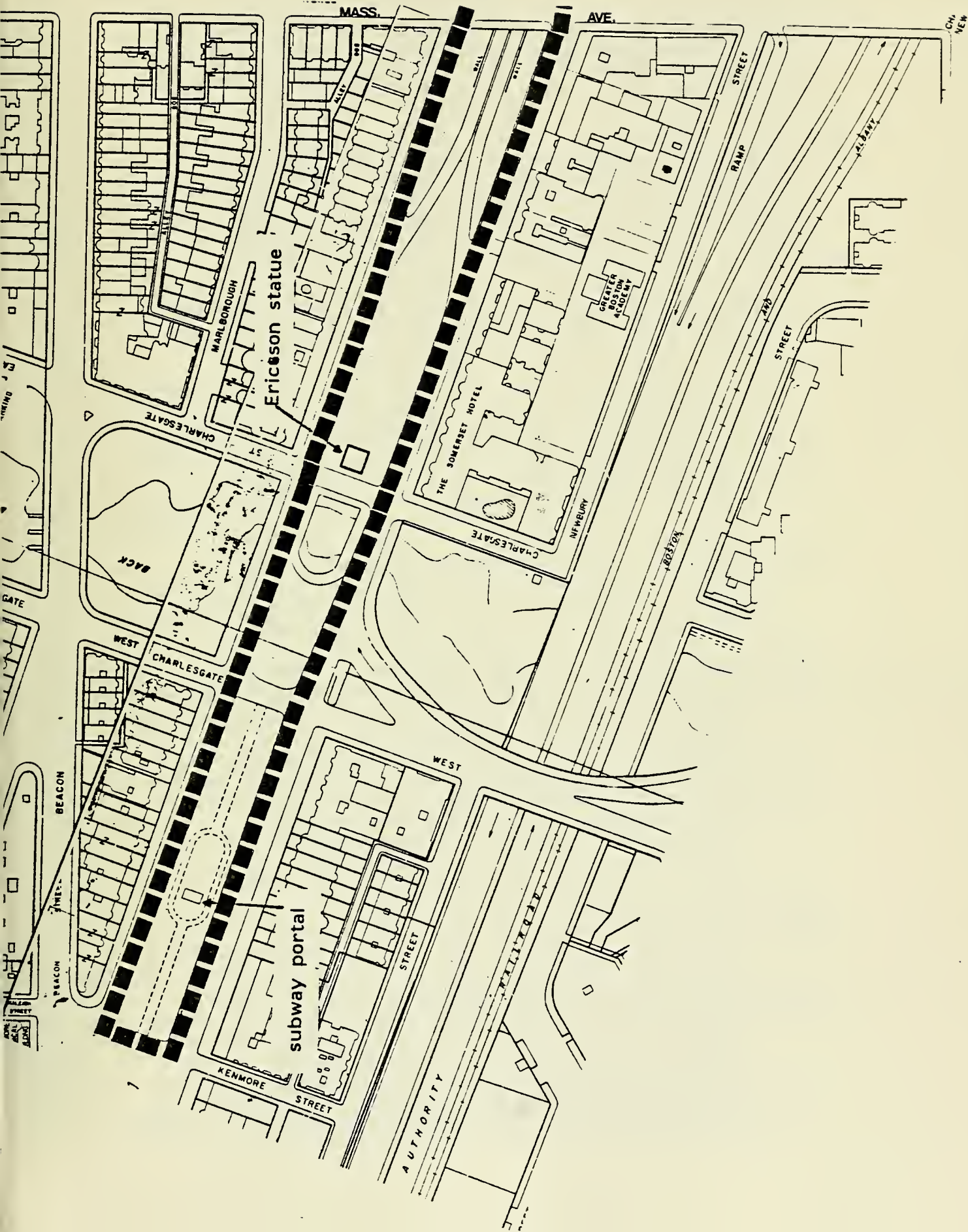












MASS.

AVE.

CH.  
NEW

Ericsson statue

subway portal

THE SOMERSET HOTEL

GREATER  
BOSTON  
ACADEMY

BACK

WEST

CHARLES GATE

WEST

STREET

KENMORE

STREET

AUTHORITY

STREET  
RAMP

STREET

CHARLES GATE

NEWBURY

BEACON

STREET

STREET

GATE

STREET



## 2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type and Use: The Commonwealth Avenue Mall is a public park covering approximately 600,000 square feet. The City of Boston Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for maintenance.

2.2 Physical Description: The Mall is a long, narrow strip of grass, trees, and monuments with a central pathway. The four long sides of the Mall face Commonwealth Avenue, a residential street; the east short side of the Mall faces across Arlington Street to the Public Garden, and the west short side faces Kenmore Square, a large commercial area and transit center. In width the Mall varies from 100 feet at Arlington Street westward to Charlesgate to 85 feet west from there to Kenmore Square. The principal features of the Mall are: (1) its topography; (2) its surroundings; (3) paths, malls and plantings; and (4) monuments.

1. Topography: As part of the Back Bay landfill project of the 19th century, the Commonwealth Avenue Mall is essentially flat. Irregularities occur at the underpass at Massachusetts Avenue; at Charlesgate, where a bridge spans the Muddy River; and near Kenmore Square, where an abandoned subway incline juts above the surface. The Mall crosses ten streets on its route from Arlington Street to Kenmore Square: Berkeley, Clarendon, Dartmouth, Exeter, Fairfield, Gloucester, Hereford, Massachusetts Avenue, Charlesgate East, and Charlesgate West. In addition, a large concrete traffic overpass runs above the Mall between Charlesgate East and West.
2. Surroundings: The Mall is one part of Commonwealth Avenue, planned by architect Arthur Gilman to be the central boulevard of the new West End. Setback restrictions and the design of the Mall resulted in the wide open character of the street. The domestic architecture of the street reflects the series of prevailing styles as the street proceeds westward: French Mansard and Queen Anne are predominant. The length of Commonwealth Avenue, as far west as Charlesgate East, is part of the Back Bay Architectural District, established by state law in 1966 and expanded in 1974.
3. Paths, malls, bridges, and plantings: The Mall has a 17-foot central pathway, consisting of macadam, beginning at Arlington Street and running as far west as the Massachusetts Avenue underpass. Farther west, no formal pathway exists, although bare areas in the grass suggest a continuation to the old subway portal near Kenmore Square. Benches, both concrete or granite memorials and standard park benches with green oak slats and concrete standards, face inward from the edge of the pathway. Other accoutrements at the path include

new trash containers along the length of the Mall and an inoperative granite drinking fountain between Exeter and Fairfield Streets. The Dartmouth Street Mall, constructed in 1970-4, crosses the Commonwealth Mall with its wide brick pathway. Once completely fenced in with an iron fence, the Mall has an assortment of fence types enclosing only part of its perimeter. At the Arlington Street end of the Mall, a wrought iron fence on granite posts marks the beginning point. The next fences along the Mall are at the cross streets Gloucester and Hereford; these fences are simple steel picket fences with granite posts, as are the next fences, under construction near the Massachusetts Avenue underpass, enclosing a section of the Mall as a small park for the elderly and small children.

Completely enclosing the Mall west of Massachusetts Avenue is a low wooden rail fence, approximately 18 inches high. A single flat rail mounted on square wooden posts composes this fence; several of the rails are engraved with the legend "BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPT." East of Massachusetts Avenue, grass completely covers the Mall from the curb line to the path. The condition of the grass deteriorates west of Massachusetts Avenue, with large bare areas and an ersatz path of compacted bare earth in the center.

Trees on the Mall are largely elms of various species, including examples of naturally cross-pollinated hybrids. A recent survey of trees on the Mall as far west as Charlesgate identified 314 of the 493 trees as elms. (Chater & Holmes, appendix I) Other species represented on the Mall include: Japanese Zelkova, London plane trees, European Linden, golden-rain tree, crab-apple, Norway maple, Hawthorn, and European mountain ash.

The general condition of the trees surveyed, on a scale of excellent-good-fair-poor-bad-dead, is fair to good. Considerable pruning is recommended to combat Dutch elm disease; the block between Clarendon and Dartmouth Streets is cited as a particular problem area.

Compacting of the soil, a result of heavy use, is the single most serious overall problem accounted for in the survey. Compacting makes the soil impervious to water and air.

Shrubbery on the Mall is limited: some shrubs decorate monuments, and the rest screen the subway portal near Kenmore Square.

A four-foot high concrete balustrade encloses the opening in the Mall where the Muddy River crosses at Charlesgate. This balustrade is of a Classical design, with urn-shaped balusters supporting the railing.

4. Monuments: Monuments and memorials on the Mall take two forms, benches and statues. Beginning at Arlington Street and proceeding westward, these are:

Charles Pagelson Howard bench -- a marble bench near Arlington Street given by the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay in memory of Howard, cited on the bench as "defender of the artistic integrity of Commonwealth Avenue."

Alexander Hamilton statue -- this granite statue by Dr. William Rimmer was installed near Arlington Street in 1865, paid for by Thomas Lee.

Henry C. Merwin bench -- a concrete bench between Arlington and Berkeley Streets.

John Glover statue -- a bronze figure of a Revolutionary War general, this statue was installed between Berkeley and Clarendon Streets in 1873. Design was by Martin Milmore.

Patrick A. Collins statue -- located between Clarendon and Dartmouth Streets, this memorial for a former mayor, congressman and diplomat was originally sited on the Mall at Charlesgate West. Collins died in 1905, and three years later his bust with two standing figures by Henry H. and Theo Alice Ruggles Kitson was erected; it was moved to its present site in 1968.

Rev. & Mrs. William Herbert Dewart bench -- a concrete bench between Clarendon and Dartmouth Streets.

William Lloyd Garrison statue -- a bronze figure of the abolitionist on granite base, this statue was built by Olin Levi Warner, and installed between Dartmouth and Exeter Streets in 1886.

Domingo F. Sarrimento statue -- a gift from Argentina, this statue of a former president of Argentina was installed in 1973 between Gloucester and Hereford Streets. The bronze figure on concrete base was designed by Yvette Compagnion.

Leif Ericsson statue -- a bronze figure of the Norse explorer in a stylized ship, this statue was formerly located at the Mall just west of Massachusetts Avenue, in one of the curving islands designed by Olmsted. The statue, by Anne Whitney, was installed in 1887 by Eben N. Horsford, a manufacturer who believed that Ericsson landed at the mouth of the Charles River. After a straightening of the Mall in 1925, the statue was moved to its current location just east of Charlesgate. A fountain contained in the base is not operating.



- 2.3 General Condition: The condition of Commonwealth Avenue Mall varies inversely with the distance from the Public Garden.

The grassy areas, while open to city traffic and heavy use by Back Bay residents, are reasonably full, especially east of Massachusetts Avenue. Large bare areas scar the Mall in the Kenmore Square section. Many trees require significant attention, largely because of epidemic Dutch Elm disease and the hazards of city climate and pollution.

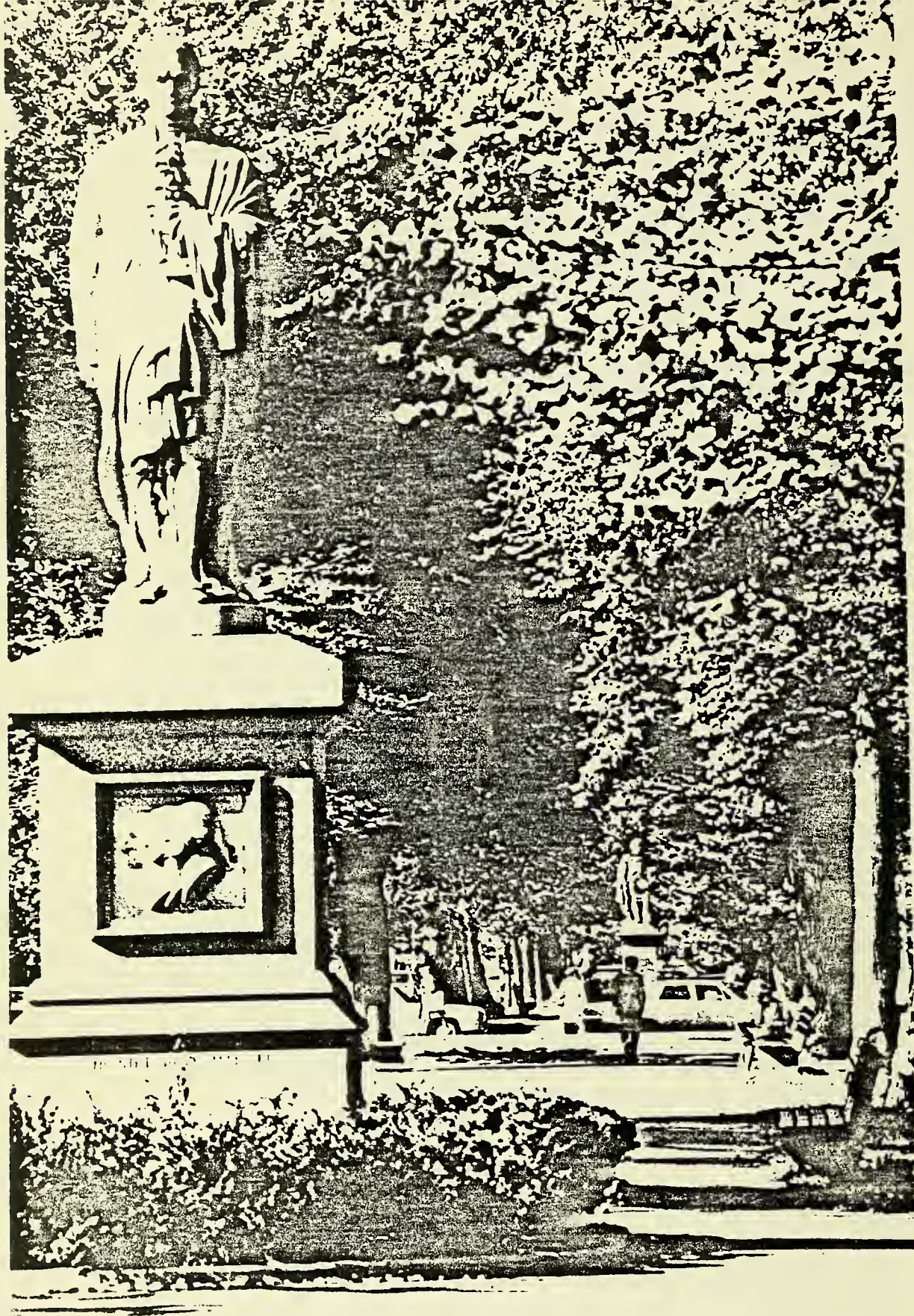
- 2.4 Physical History: At its beginnings, Commonwealth Avenue Mall was built as soon as landfill became available. In 1860, the Mall reached Clarendon Street, by 1870 it reached beyond Exeter Street; and in 1876 all of Commonwealth Avenue east of West Chester Park (Massachusetts Avenue) was filled. (Bunting, 1967, p. 366; Whitehill, 1968, pp. 157 ff.) Olmsted's western extension of Commonwealth Avenue, designed in 1881, was completed by 1888.

The principal changes in the Mall since that time, except for the addition and subtraction of monuments, benches, and the like, have been to accommodate the automobile. In 1925, the original curving pattern for Olmsted's section of the Mall was straightened to correspond to the same plan as the Mall east of Massachusetts Avenue. The Parks Department report for that year trumpets the change as "elimination of dangerous curves and junctions." (Parks Department, p. 9) In 1937, the existing underpass at Massachusetts Avenue was built, again to help solve a traffic bottleneck. The overpass at Charlesgate was constructed in 1965; this route affects the Back Bay Fens more directly than the Mall, although it does obstruct the axial view west from Massachusetts Avenue.

The other major change to the Mall was also to accommodate transportation: this was the subway portal and tracks built in 1914 from the new Boylston Street subway to the surface station in Kenmore Square. The present underground Kenmore Station was opened in 1932, whereupon the portal was closed off and the tracks removed.

- 2.5 Photographs: attached.





COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

view facing west from Arlington  
Street

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke





COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Alexander Hamilton statue

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke









PATRICK  
ANDREW  
COLLINS  
1844-1905

BORN IN IRELAND  
AND ALWAYS HER  
LOVER AMERICAN  
BY EARLY TRAINING  
AND MARRIED INTO  
AMERICAN BLOOD  
HIS STUDY AT HARVARD  
EARNED HIM A  
DEGREE IN 1871  
LAWYER 1868-72  
MEMBER OF THE  
MASS LEGISLATURE  
1873-77 MEMBER  
OF CONGRESS 1877-81  
GOVERNOR 1881-85  
MAYOR OF BOSTON  
1885-88  
A TALENTED  
HONEST GENEROUS  
SERVICABLE MAN

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Collins memorial

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke

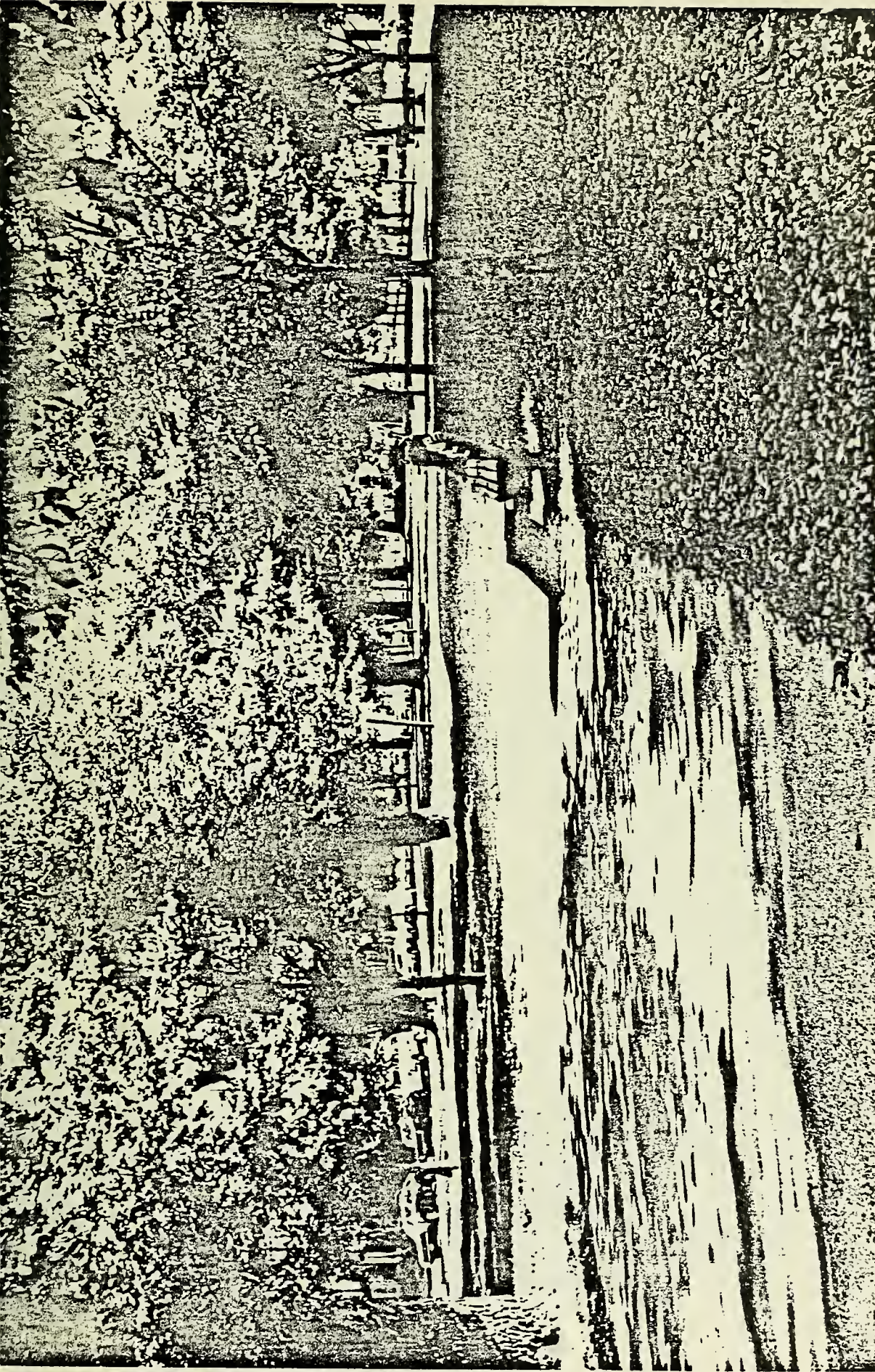




COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Garrison statue

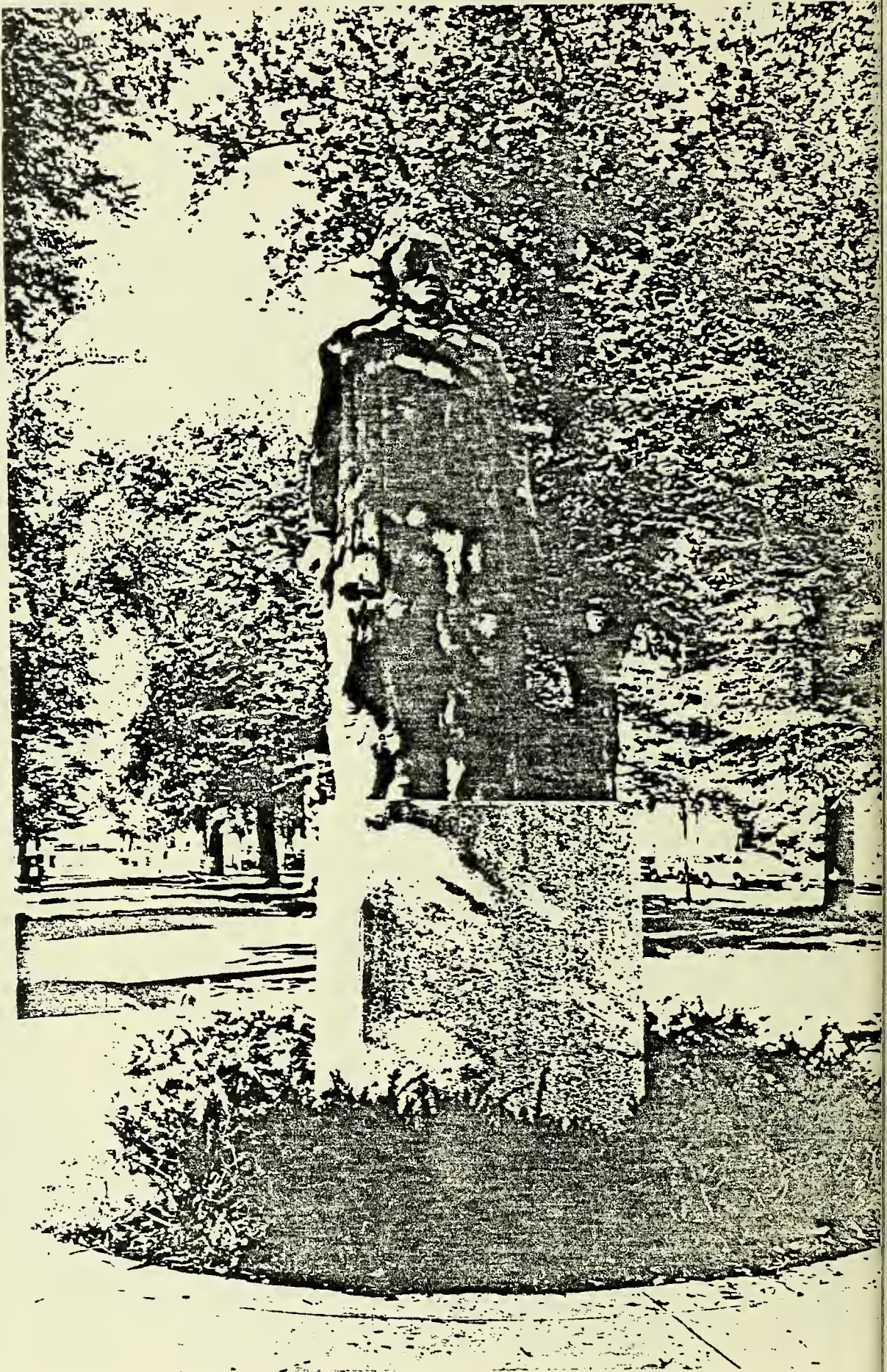




COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

view facing east from Exeter St.  
photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke





COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Sarrimento Statue

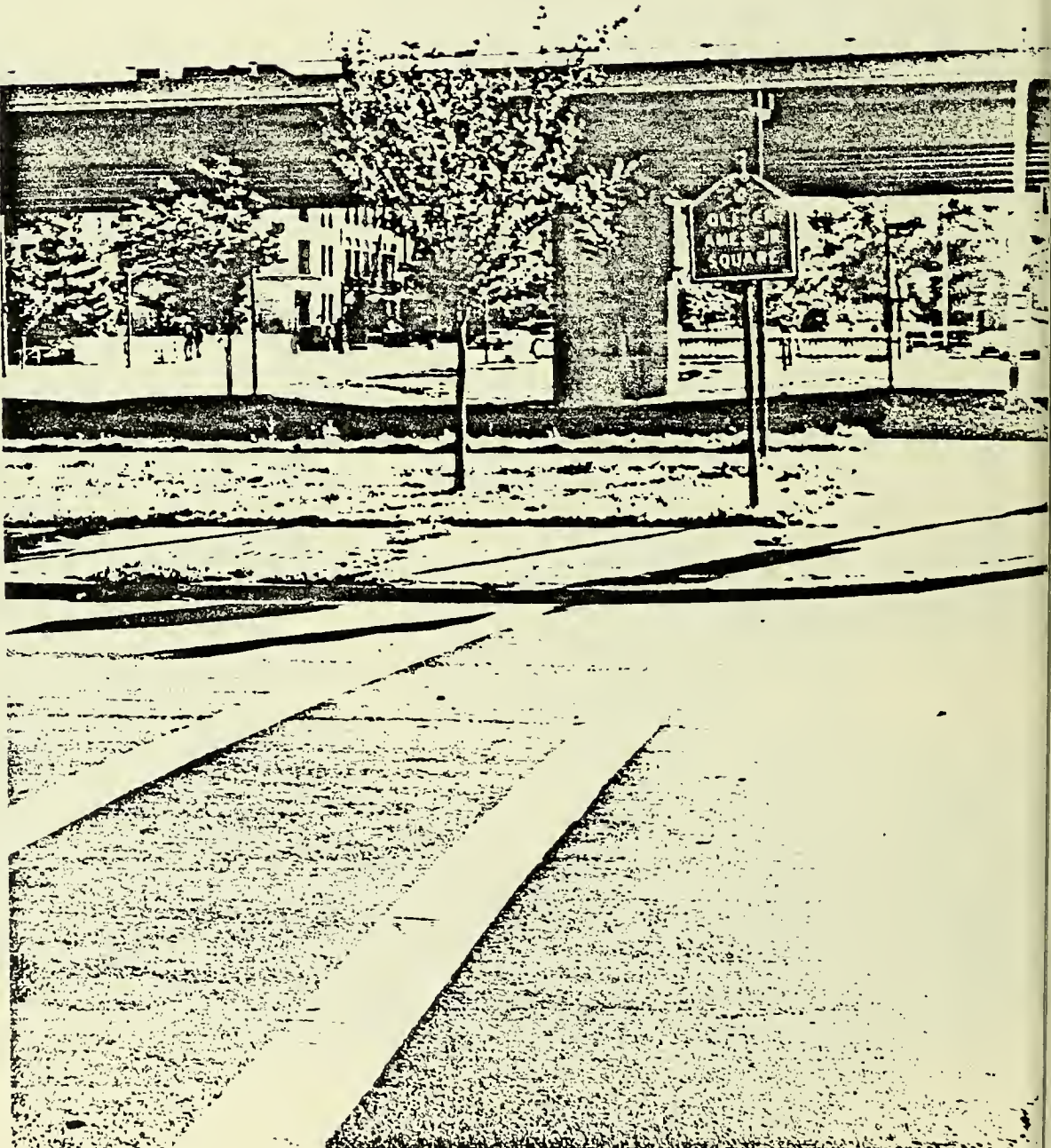
photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke





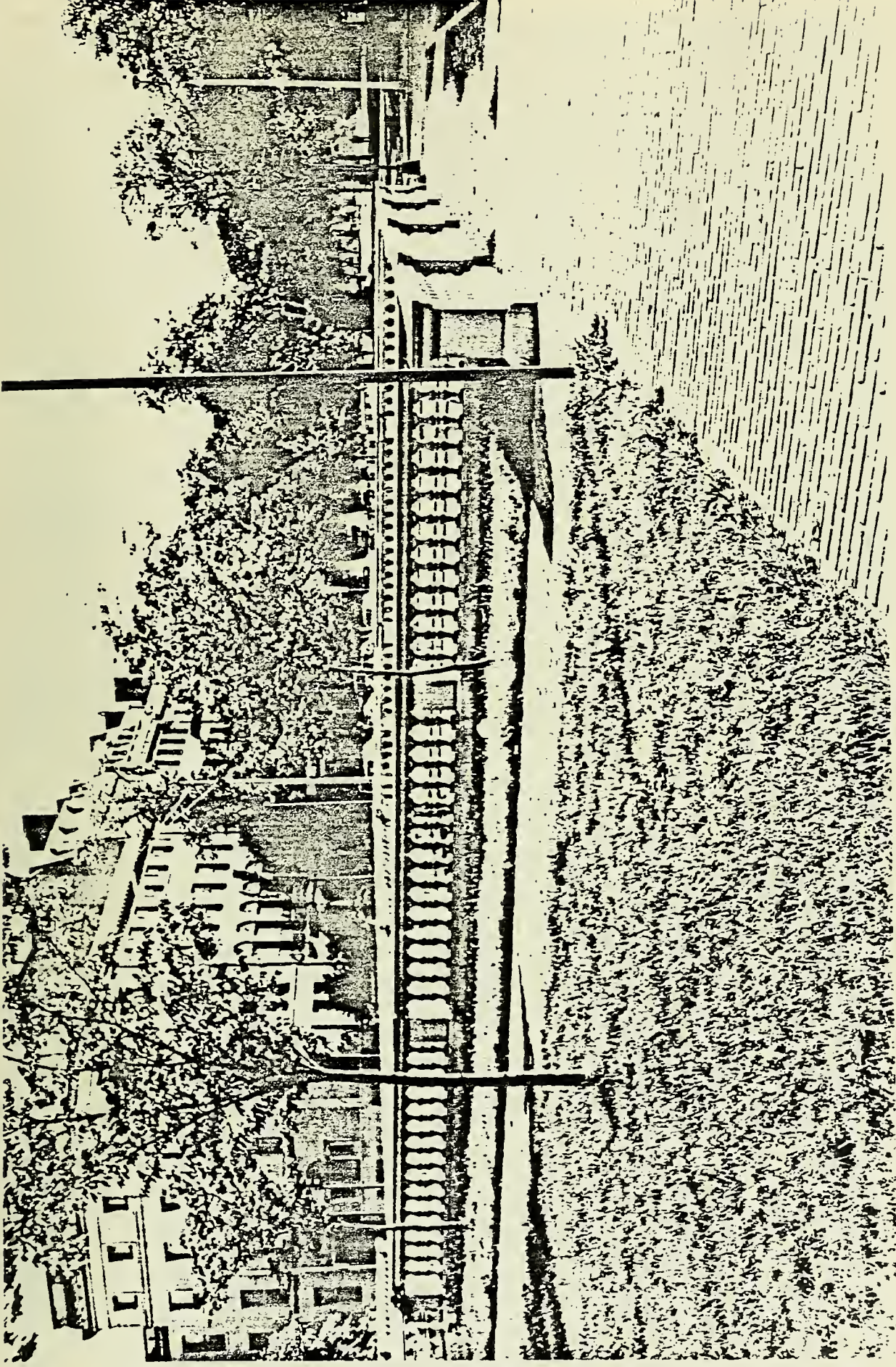
COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL  
Massachusetts Ave. underpass  
photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke





COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL  
traffic overpass at Charlesgate  
photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke



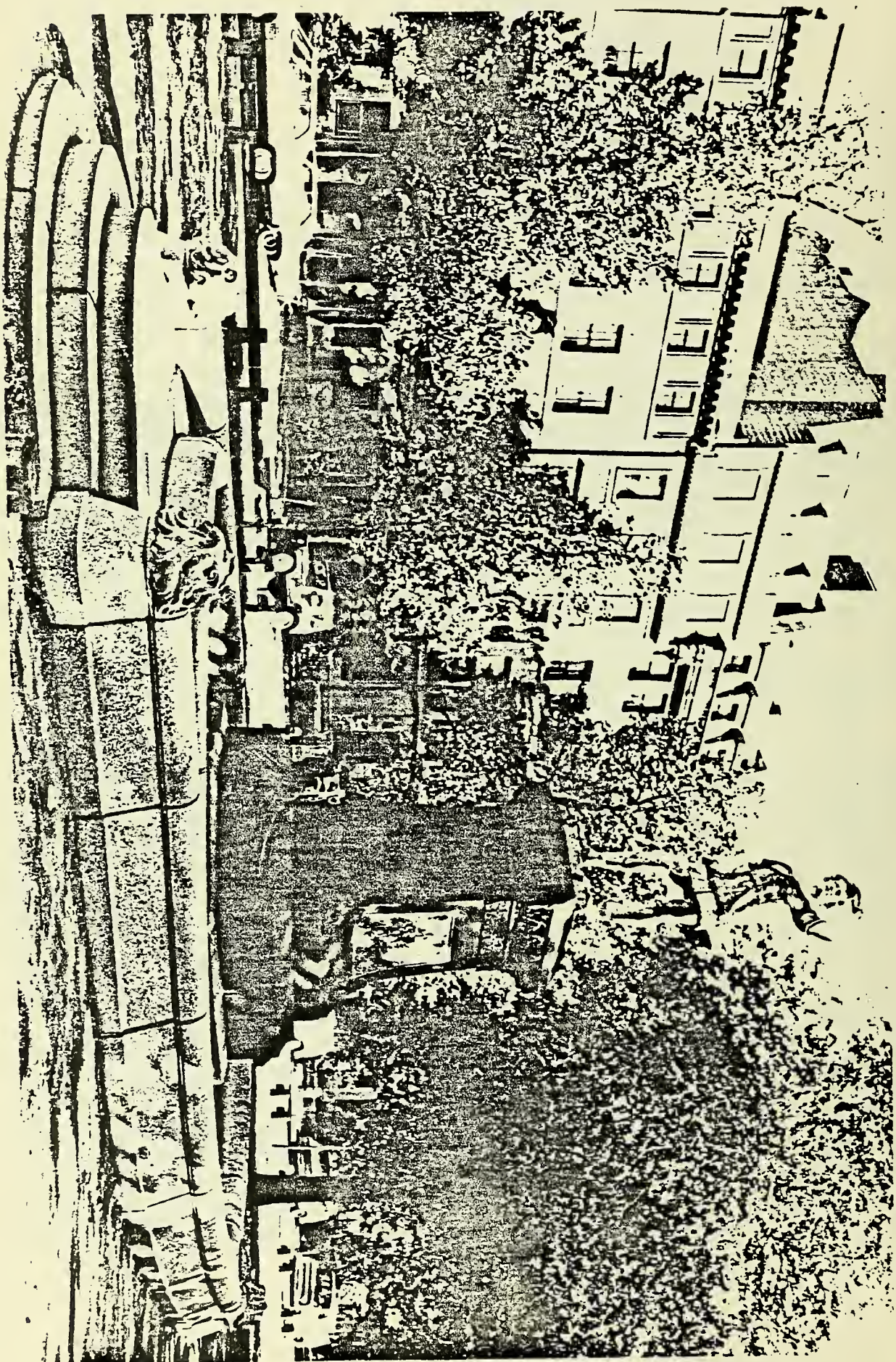


COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Bridge balustrade at Charlesgate

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke



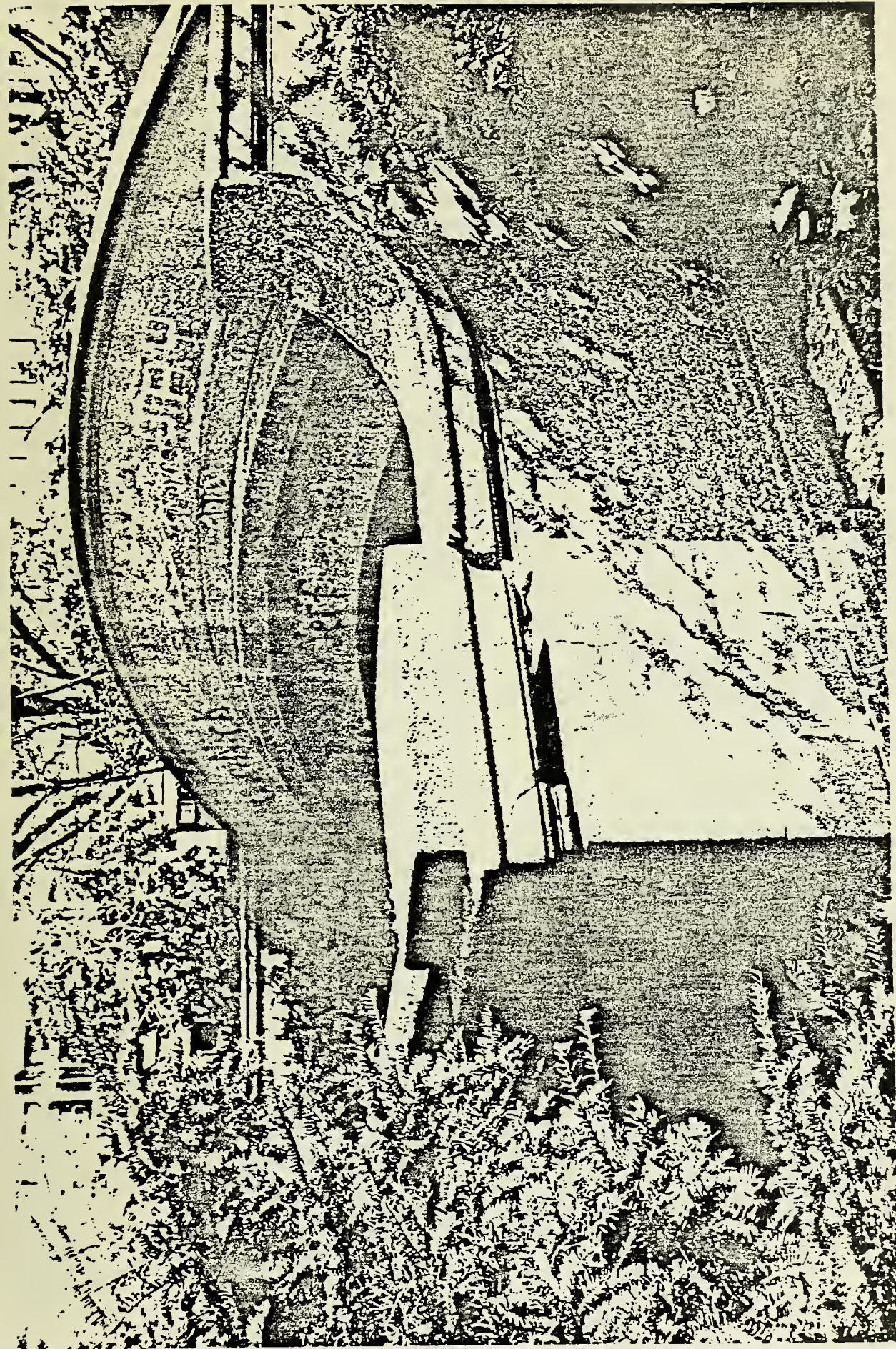


COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Leif Ericsson statue

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke



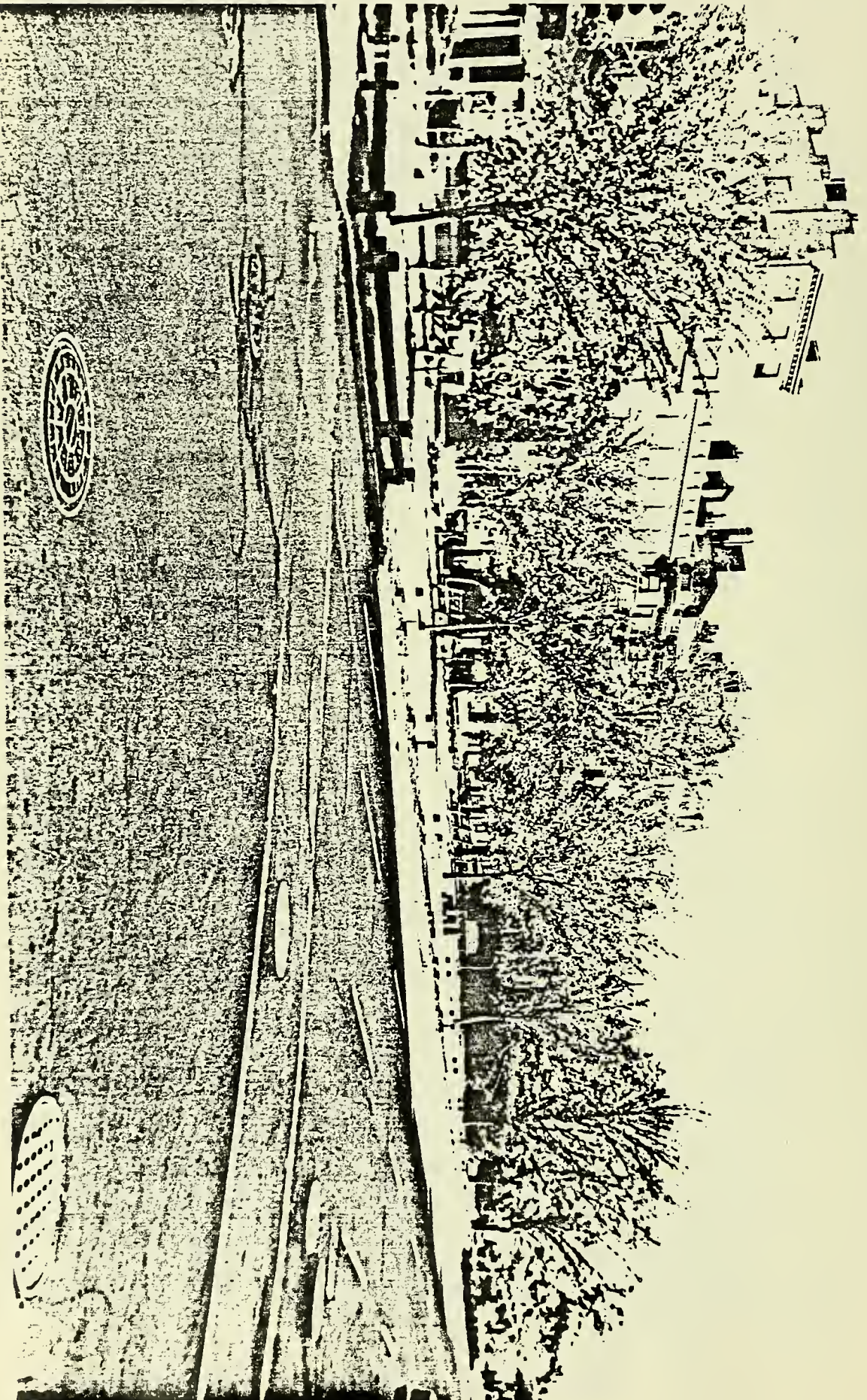


COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

Kenmore Sq. subway portal

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke





COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

view facing east from Kenmore St.

photo 10-77 Robert P. Burke



### 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1 Architectural Significance: Commonwealth Avenue Mall is one of the principal urban design features of Back Bay, one of America's first urban areas planned in the French Second Empire style pioneered in France by The Baron Hausmann. "In planning Commonwealth Avenue in 1856 as a great boulevard and in constructing in the early sixties blocks of impressive brownstone mansions akin in style to those being built in Paris in the same years, Boston expressed her will to assume a place among the great cities of the world. Here, symbolically, in adopting the new architectural style of Napoleon III's Second Empire, she exchanged her provincial and well-worn garb of the Greek Revival tradition for the more splendid and worldly robes of contemporary Europe." (Bunting, 1967, p. 15).

The opportunity for such a Back Bay plan resulted from the failure of tidal dams across the bay to provide sufficient water power. Railroad causeways subsequently built atop the dams added to stagnation of the water, which had long been used as a depository for sewage; ultimately, the city Board of Health in 1849 declared the bay "to be one of nuisance, offensive and injurious to the large and increasing population residing upon it." (quoted in Memorial History, IV, p. 35) Once a dispute between Boston and Roxbury over title to the area was settled by the legislature (by giving the Commonwealth itself the land), the fill began following a street layout drawn up by Arthur Gilman.

French architecture, which Gilman had observed in Hausmann's replan of Paris, was the pre-eminent style during the mid-19th century: not only was Hausmann a renowned architect but the only systematic architecture education in the world was available in France. (Bunting, op.cit., p. 75) Gilman's overall design for Back Bay won out over numerous other proposals, and houses were built on the grid as soon as fill was completed.

Commonwealth Avenue, with its mall bisecting both the avenue and the entire Back Bay, was clearly planned as an axial street. "In one of his last memoranda, the late Matthew Nowicki, a brilliant modern architect, and one of the original planners of Chandigash, pointed out the importance of a strong axis for holding together any large complex plan..." (Mumford, p. 20) "The great scheme of axial extension makes a sharp break from the English, cell-like, additive scheme of private residential squares which had previously guided Boston's building." (Bunting, op.cit., p. 397) The South End, nearer to Boston Neck, had been designed not long before on this English plan.



Important to the axial design and sense of space of Commonwealth Avenue were deed restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth for size and setback requirements. Individual lots were standardized at 26 feet in width, and buildings were required to be set back 20 feet from the property line. Even with these restrictions, "... lots facing broad Commonwealth Avenue sold for almost twice the price of those facing the narrower adjacent streets." (Bunting, XII, p. 22)

The Mall on its own level represents, as does the nearby Public Garden, a commitment to in-town open space unusual for its time. "... the generous allotment of land for streets and parks was probably unique in mid-century urban planning in America. The sense of spaciousness which permeates the district was further enhanced by the large open areas that existed on all sides." (Bunting, 1967, p. 397) "The green mall down Commonwealth Avenue links the green open areas of the Public Garden and Fenway Park [i.e., the Back Bay Fens] and serves as a channel to bring a sense of open country into the heart of the district." (ibid., p. 67)

The original Mall terminated at West Chester Park, now called Massachusetts Avenue. In the Back Bay Fens development of the 1880's, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted was presented with a dilemma: continuing Commonwealth Avenue to the Fens on its existing line would cause an awkward diagonal grade crossing before the Fens with the Boston and Albany Railroad. Olmsted's solution was to turn the avenue approximately 20 degrees northward, thus making it parallel with the railroad and intersecting the extension of Beacon Street at Governor Square. He continued the Mall out to Governor Square (now Kenmore Square) making it the first part of his "Emerald Necklace" park system; but instead of keeping its rectangular form he designed a curving set of islands and sidewalks in the neighborhood of the Muddy River and the Fens. Traffic engineers straightened this section of the Mall in 1925.

The monument sculpture of the Mall has been also an important feature of its design from its first days. Even the most recent addition, the Sarrimeno statue in 1973, is respectful of scale and materials of similar statuary on the Mall. Thus, the Mall presents a selection of monument sculpture from both the 19th and 20th centuries, and in particular displays the contrast among the three periods represented, early Victorian, late Victorian and modern.

The quality of the Mall's surroundings adds further significance. The buildings at the eastern end of the avenue, with their mansard roofs, are consistent with the overall design of the area; toward the west, different styles (notably Queen Anne) turn the avenue into a time line of Victorian residential architecture. As mentioned above, the setbacks of the houses add to the breadth and sense of space of the Mall. At its

western end, the Mall is connected with the Back Bay Fens, Olmsted's triumph of landscape design; this connection is no longer so clear because of changes to benefit auto traffic.

The Mall's overall value depends on its stature as a principal extension of greenery into a densely built area. "Because of Arthur Gilman's Commonwealth Avenue, because of Frederick Law Olmsted's park system, and because of the open stretches of the Charles River, the twentieth century inhabitant, standing in the heart of the city and looking out onto sprawling modern Boston, can enjoy the restorative qualities of space and greenery so rare in other urban centers. Despite the grime and congestion of a huge metropolis, one senses that he still has a lifeline to the open country even though the country has receded far beyond the visible horizon." (ibid., p. 399)

3.2 Relationship to criteria for Landmark Designation: The Commonwealth Avenue Mall meets the standards of Chapter 772 for Landmark designation in the following areas:

1. as a principal component of the design of Back Bay, one of the nation's first urban areas planned in the French Second Empire manner, and as the first French-plan boulevard to be built in the United States and also as designed by two of the nation's most prominent urban designers, Gilman and Olmsted, the Mall is clearly a feature of the city "representative of elements of... landscape design... which embody distinctive characteristics of a type inherently valuable for study of a period... (and) the notable work of... (a) landscape architect, designer or builder whose work influenced the development of the city, the commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation." (Ch. 772 (1975), sec. 4)
2. the section of the mall east of Charlesgate as a significant section of the Back Bay National Register district, a criterion in the statute (ibid.)\*

\* The Mall from Charlesgate East to Kenmore Street is not included in the National Register district, and does not qualify under this one criterion.

#### 4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

- 4.1 Current ownership and status: The Commonwealth Avenue Mall is owned by the City of Boston; thus no property taxes are paid on this land.

No changes in ownership are planned for the Mall. A capital improvement program is being proposed for the Mall west of Charlesgate. Maintenance of the entire Mall is paid for by the City, with occasional assistance from Federal funds.



## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

- 5.1 Background: The Commonwealth Avenue Mall runs through two separate planning districts designated by the Boston Redevelopment Authority: Back Bay and Fenway-Kenmore. Both are 19th century landfill projects, with the Kenmore sub-area of the Fenway-Kenmore district being an extension (completion) of the Back Bay fill project, which ultimately added 450 acres to the City.

From its inception, the Back Bay was planned as both a major civic improvement and a substantial residential district. There was not only concern over the sanitary conditions in the area, but also over crowding in the existing residential sections of the city. Boston's population had increased a full 33 percent from 1840 to 1850, adding pressure both on space and on the sewage disposal system, which dumped into the stagnant Back Bay. The development attracted many of the city's leading families, and the handsome townhouses and mansions reflected the tastes of its fashionable and affluent clientele. Cultural institutions and churches also added dignity to the area.

The original deed restrictions against incompatible land uses, more recently replaced by zoning, have protected sizeable sections of the area against commercial encroachment. Horse-cars were prohibited on Commonwealth Avenue, for example. In 1966, after much dispute over early '60's plans for high-rise development along Commonwealth Avenue, the legislature created the Back Bay Residential District and the Back Bay Architectural Commission, a design review board. In 1974, the District was expanded and renamed the Back Bay Architectural District.

Developed as an upper-class district, Back Bay today is predominantly home for young adults and students. In recent years there has been an influx of families with children, and with consolidation of many of the small schools, the college-age population has leveled off and possibly even declined. Housing is predominantly a mix of quality apartment buildings, lodging houses, and dormitories. Owner-occupancy in 1970 was 8 percent.

In the Fenway, Frederick Law Olmsted's 1881 solution to problems in the Back Bay Fens, including tidal gates and fill to create a park, led to renewed residential and commercial development and the westward expansion of the city. Public transit in the late 19th century made the region more accessible for residential use, and the Boston Fire of 1872 led such institutions as the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the Boston Symphony Orchestra to locate here in the late 1800's.

The Kenmore Square area had existed prior to the redesign of the Fens, as an annex of the downtown characterized by fine hotels, shops, and professional offices. Wealthy families moved into townhouses on Bay State Road around the turn of the century, and areas along Peterborough Street and Audubon Circle were built up with large apartment structures by speculators in ensuing decades. Just south of the square, a light industrial and wholesale district flourished. The fibre of this area has changed greatly in the past 30 years because of the dominance of Boston University and other colleges over the area, the placement of highway and railroad lines and Fenway Park, and the change in location preference for offices and manufacturing facilities.

Kenmore Square today is a major vehicular traffic and transit node, and a commercial district of citywide importance. In the past, the Square was a center for fine hotels. Today, many of these hotels are used as dormitories by educational institutions: this dominance of students is reflected in the Square's many retail stores, restaurants, and night clubs. Bay State Road is a tree-lined street of well-kept brick and brownstone rowhouses. Interspersed in this generally residential area are doctors' offices and several buildings owned by Boston University.

The area is populated mainly by students: persons aged 15 to 24 compose over 80 percent of the population. Few families live in the area, just 3 percent of residents are elderly, and group quartering provides housing for 63 percent of the population (contrasting with the overall Fenway-Kenmore figure of 36%). Density is twice that of the city overall, although much land use is non-residential.

- 5.2 Planning Issues: As identified in district planning reports by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the principal issues facing the two districts are:

Back Bay: preservation of housing stock; commercial area needs; neighborhood capital improvements; downtown redevelopment project impacts; institutional expansion and contraction; and traffic congestion and parking.

Fenway-Kenmore: residential area uncertainties; Kenmore Square transformation; open space improvement and access; disposition of urban renewal parcels; traffic and parking; upper Boylston Street reuse; institutional encroachment; scarcity of social services.

The issues of principal effect to Commonwealth Avenue Mall are those of redevelopment impact, open space improvement, and traffic improvement. The effect of redevelopment such as Park Plaza will be felt mainly in the easternmost section of the Mall, along with Boston Common and the Public Garden.



Increase in use can have deleterious effect on the condition of grass and trees. A master plan for this easternmost link of the Emerald Necklace can provide solutions, possibly without restrictions on types of use.

For Back Bay and Kenmore residents, the Mall is the most easily reached open space: access to the Charles River Esplanade is hazardous, and the heavy auto traffic on Storrow Drive negatively affects the atmosphere (both figuratively and literally). The segment in the Kenmore Square area is in poor condition, and requires significant expenditure for improvement; high density here implies a great need for such space.

Through the area, traffic and parking present a major and difficult problem. In Back Bay, traffic lights and intersection crosswalks make access to the Mall comparatively safe. However, the lack of fences makes the Mall's grassy area hazardous for families with children, who have begun to move back into the area in small numbers. From the underpass west, the automobile reigns over Commonwealth Avenue, to the extent that the Mall sometimes becomes, illegally, a parking lot during baseball games. Enforcement of speed limits and increased towing of illegally parked cars can alleviate this problem.

- 5.3 Relationship to Current Zoning and Design Controls: The section of Back Bay through which the Commonwealth Avenue Mall runs is zoned H-4-70. This zoning permits all residential uses plus several institutional uses, such as elementary schools, hospitals, rest homes, and laboratories. Park use is an allowable use throughout the city; thus the Mall as park for passive recreation conforms to the city's zoning code.

From Arlington Street to Charlesgate East, the Mall is within the borders of the Back Bay Architectural District, expanded in 1974 from the 1966 Back Bay Residential District. Design review in this district is restricted to buildings; thus, the Back Bay Architectural Commission has no control over changes to the Mall (except that it must approve design of new structures, if any, proposed for the Mall). Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 restricts the Boston Landmarks Commission to designation of interior features and landscape features in both the Back Bay and Beacon Hill historic districts. Thus, it is the Landmarks Commission that, if it designates the Mall, would have design review powers.

## 6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

Because all but the small westernmost portion of the Commonwealth Avenue Mall lies in the area in which the Commission may not designate districts or protection areas, the only designation the Commission may give for the Commonwealth Avenue Mall east of Massachusetts Avenue is Landmark. The short section of the Mall from Massachusetts Avenue to Kenmore Street, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, may reasonably belong in an Olmsted Park District running from the Mall to Franklin Park; however, this would divide the logical unit of the Mall into two separate designations, without allowing a single "Emerald Necklace" designation from the Common to Franklin Park.

The Commission thus may choose to designate the entire length of the Mall as a Landmark; or instead to designate as a Landmark that portion from Arlington Street to Massachusetts Avenue, leaving the westernmost section to be included in a future Olmsted Park District.

Another option is to nominate that same westernmost section to the National Register of Historic Places or to extend the Olmsted Park System district to include that portion. Such a listing would provide protection only against action by or sponsored by the Federal Government. The section east of Massachusetts Avenue is part of the Back Bay National Register district; it is possible to list separately the entire Mall, although the Mall does qualify as an historically significant part of the district for purposes of grant applications and Section 106 reviews.

If it chooses, the Commission may also neither designate the Mall under Chapter 772 nor nominate it to the National Register.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that Commonwealth Avenue Mall, extending from Arlington Street to Kenmore Street, be designated a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975. Boundaries should be the curb lines of the Mall, excluding the public rights-of-way of the cross streets; see attached map.

Recommended standards and criteria for proposed changes to the property are attached.

100-100000  
200-100000  
300-100000  
400-100000  
500-100000  
600-100000  
700-100000  
800-100000  
900-100000  
1000-100000



## 8.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Boston Elevated Railway Company: Fifty Years of Unified Transportation in Boston. Boston: 1938.
- Boston Redevelopment Authority: "Back Bay-Beacon Hill-Bay Village District Profile and Proposed 1977-79 Neighborhood Improvement Program." Boston: 1976.
- : "Fenway-Kenmore District Profile and Proposed 1977-79 Neighborhood Improvement Program." Boston: 1976.
- Bunting, Bainbridge: Houses of Boston's Back Bay. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1967.
- : "The Plan of the Back Bay Area in Boston," in Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. XII, No. 2.
- Chater, Clifford S. and Holmes, Francis W.: "Shade Tree Report for Commonwealth Avenue, the Public Garden, the Common." (unpublished report) Boston: 1977.
- City of Boston Parks Department: Special Report. Boston: 1925.
- The Memorial History of Boston. Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1880.
- Mumford, Lewis: "The Significance of Back Bay Boston," in Back Bay Boston: The City as a Work of Art. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1969.
- Whitehill, Walter M.: A Topographical History of Boston. (Second Edition). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968.
- : Boston Statues. Barre, Massachusetts: Barre Publishers, 1970.

GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR PHYSICAL, LANDSCAPE OR TOPOGRAPHICAL  
FEATURE(S) DESIGNATED AS LANDMARKS.

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that alternation to the landscape design will be minimized.
2. Changes to the property which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. "Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.
3. New materials should, whenever appropriate, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
4. New additions or alterations to the landscape should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property.
5. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landscape would be unimpaired.
6. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property that serve as the more important public ways.

B. WALKS, STEPS AND PAVED AREAS

1. Deteriorated paving materials should be replaced with the same material or a material which matches as closely as possible. Consideration will be given to an alternate paving material if it can be shown that its properties will assist in site maintenance and/or will improve the original or later integral design concept.
2. Original layout of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the design.

C. PLANT MATERIALS

1. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained.
2. All plant materials should be cared for according to good horticultural practices. Hazardous plants or portions of should be removed.

3. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the existing landscape design and its later adaptations.
4. New plant materials should either be the same as the existing or be similar in form, color and texture.
5. New locations for plantings or new selection of species with a different form, color, or texture must not alter the overall site design.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions of plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas, creating new ones where appropriate, and maintaining new spaces.
7. Whenever appropriate, plant materials rather than structural materials should be used to solve erosion problems.

#### D. LANDFORMS

1. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the property.
2. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not alter the existing design concept.
3. Existing water courses or bodies should not be altered. Consideration will, however, be given to a proposal if it is to improve site drainage, to improve water quality, to enhance the landscape design, to provide a wider recreational use or to improve a wildlife habitat.
4. All wetlands shall be preserved.
5. All shorelines of water courses or bodies shall be protected from erosion in a manner most compatible with the site design.
6. All rock outcrops shall be preserved as a natural form in the landscape.

#### E. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Whenever possible, original or later integral architectural elements such as benches, fences, fountains, statues, bridges, lighting, shelters and signs shall be maintained.
2. Maintenance should not alter the original or later integral color, material or design. Consideration, however, will be given to alterations that will either improve the design or the function of the element.



3. Architectural elements that are replaced should be of the same or similar material and design of the original or later integral feature. Consideration, however, will be given to changes that will improve the function of the architectural element without altering the integrity of the design.
4. Architectural elements may be added if they are no longer functionally useful and their removal will not alter to a significant degree the site design.
5. Architectural elements may be added if they will not alter the integrity of the design, are necessary for the site safety, are useful for site maintenance, and/or will improve site usage.

## STANDARDS AND CRITERIA - Commonwealth Avenue Mall

### A. APPROACH

1. The intent is to maintain the Mall's existing character as lineal park and centerpiece of the street. The layout of paths, monuments, trees, and grass areas shall be maintained wherever possible.
2. No uses shall be allowed if they disrupt the Mall's present use as quiet sitting and strolling space.
3. No active recreational facilities shall be permitted.
4. Special events shall be permitted only if organized to prevent damage to grass, plantings, monuments, and other features.
5. Maintenance and replacement of existing monuments, benches, trees, and fences should be done in a manner consistent with the Mall's character. No new elements shall be permitted if they would alter special vistas or open spaces; existing interfering elements should, if possible, be removed.
6. No motor vehicles of any kind, except maintenance vehicles approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation, shall be permitted on any part of the Mall at any time.

### B. PLANTINGS

1. Future plantings shall be guided by the original design for the Mall, as modified by Shurtleff.
2. All new trees, whether replacements for diseased or fillers for gaps in the planting rows, shall be semi-mature deciduous shade trees, minimum size 3.5-4 inch caliper. Since the existing planting on the Mall consists of various species of elm, new trees shall be improved introductions of Ulmus or Zelkova family resistant to disease, drought, and pollution. Examples include Zelkova Serrata Village Green and Ulmus Hollandica Groenwald. If a cure for Dutch elm disease is found, only American elm shall be planted on the Mall.
3. Except for flowering shrubs, which shall be permitted only near monuments and the Kenmore Square subway portal, no plantings other than approved species of trees shall be permitted.
4. Removal of diseased, dead, and unsalvageable trees, as well as those trees that violate the formal row planting plan, is permitted.

### C. WALKS, STEPS, AND PAVED AREAS

1. Deteriorated pavement on the paths shall be replaced with paving material of the same quality, texture, and color. An overall plan for the Mall may change material on the path to a type in keeping with the period.
2. No new pathways are permitted, except that a pathway may be paved for the Mall west of Massachusetts Avenue. Such a pathway must be of material similar to and no wider than the path on the Mall east of Massachusetts Avenue.

### D. MONUMENTS AND FOUNTAINS

1. Existing memorials, fountains, statues, and monuments shall be carefully preserved and restored where necessary. Plans for any such work should be reviewed by the Arts Commission.
2. Location of new monuments shall not disturb special vistas, nor impede pedestrian circulation. They will be similar in scale, material, and character to those now on the Mall. Any plans for new monuments shall be reviewed by the Arts Commission.
3. All new monuments and fountains shall be located on the central path. No monuments or fountains may be placed in the grass on either side of the path.

### E. FURNITURE

1. All existing concrete and granite memorial benches shall be carefully preserved and restored where necessary.
2. The location of new benches shall be studied in relation to existing sitting area and pedestrian circulation. For ease in cutting grass, new benches should be placed on the paved walkway instead of on the grass.

New benches shall, wherever possible, match the existing benches in form, material, and color. In any case, bench design shall be compatible with the character of the Mall. New benches not memorials shall consist of wood slats on concrete or metal base. Design of new memorial benches shall be reviewed by the Arts Commission.

3. The existing granite drinking fountain shall be preserved and made operational if possible.

New drinking fountains shall be modern in design, and located along the central path, in consideration of high use areas.

4. Trash receptacles shall be simple, functional, and unobtrusive.



## F. FENCES

1. Any new fence shall be located around the Mall's perimeter only. Such fences shall be similar in design, material, and color to the original 19th century iron fence. Any plan for a new fence shall be reviewed by the Arts Commission.
2. The existing concrete balustrade at Charlesgate shall be retained.

## G. SIGNS

1. The only signs permitted on the Mall are those providing essential public information, such as street signs, or public safety regulations, such as prohibition of vehicles.
2. An overall master plan should be drawn up for signage on the Mall, the Common, Public Garden, and Back Bay Fens. New signs shall be similar in design to those suggested in such a plan.
3. No signs shall be attached to or be part of trees, street furniture, or fences.

## H. LIGHTING

New lighting fixtures should be compatible with existing fixtures on the Mall and on Commonwealth Avenue proper. Special fixtures for lighting monuments should be designed in coordination with the Arts Commission.

## I. MISCELLANEOUS

1. The former subway portal near Kenmore Square, if not removed and smoothed over (which the Commission encourages), shall remain screened by plantings. For this purpose, shrubbery and small trees are permitted.
2. The Mall west of Massachusetts Avenue is in serious need of attention, and the Commission encourages appropriate improvements.

## J. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Boston Landmarks Commission also recommends that other public agencies take the following actions to aid in preservation of the Mall:

### 1. Traffic

Besides the pollution and occasional accident damage caused by automobiles along nearly every street in the city, traffic along Commonwealth Avenue causes another type of damage to

the trees. Trucks and buses, presumably prohibited from the Avenue, cause this additional damage by breaking the overhanging branches of the elm trees.

The Commission strongly recommends that a truck and bus prohibition on Commonwealth Avenue be enforced, and that signs prohibiting trucks be placed along the cross streets at the intersections with the Avenue. (Such signs are permitted on the Mall, if necessary, under standard G: Signs.)

2. Dogs

Enforcement of the city's leash law should be increased to help keep dogs from fouling the Mall's paths and grass.

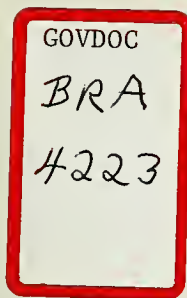








gov94-626



Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission  
on the potential designation of  
The INTERNATIONAL TRUST COMPANY BUILDING  
as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975

Approved by: Marcia Myers Aug 30, 1977  
Executive Director Date

Approved by: Pauline Chase Harrell Aug 30, 1977  
Chairman Date

C69  
B15





## CONTENTS

- 1.0 Location of Property
- 2.0 Description of Property
- 3.0 Significance
- 4.0 Economic Status
- 5.0 Planning Context
- 6.0 Alternative Approaches
- 7.0 Recommendations
- 8.0 Bibliography
- 9.0 Standards and Criteria





## 1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

1.1 Address: 39-47 Milk Street, Boston, Ward 3. The assessor's parcel number is 4662.

1.2 Area in which the Property is located:

The building is located on Milk Street near the heart of the Downtown Financial District. It is in close proximity to Washington Street and the Old South Church, Post Office Square, and two major new bank buildings, and is within five minutes of Park Street, Government Center, and the Washington Street shopping area. The immediate area is characterized by a mix of 4 and 5 story post-fire commercial buildings, 8 to 15 story turn-of-the-century elevator office buildings, and modern high-rise office towers.

1.3 Map showing location: attached





INTERNATIONAL TRUST COMPANY  
BUILDING  
45 Milk Street













## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

### 2.1 Type and Use:

The parcel is 7,200 square feet in extent, and contains a 9 story elevator office building which occupies the entire site on the south side of Milk Street between Arch and Devonshire. The building is now vacant.

### 2.2 General Description:

The International Trust Company Building is a nine-story office building, five bays wide and deep, measuring approximately 100 feet on each side and 125 feet from sidewalk to cornice line. It is constructed of load-bearing masonry piers and walls set into a reinforced concrete foundation, with floors supported on steel I-beams. This proto-skeleton frame is faced with buff-colored Indiana limestone and has plinths of polished Quincy granite and a flat, composition roof.

Designed by the prominent Boston architect, William G. Preston, the building was built in two stages. The original portion, completed in 1893, was 8 stories high and 2 bays wide on Milk Street, extending the full five bays back along Devonshire. Built by the noted Boston firm of Gooch & Pray, this earlier building used portions of the foundation and internal structure of its predecessor, the five-story 'Iron Building'.

Preston enlarged the 1893 building substantially in 1906, by extending it along Milk to Arch Street (adding a central bay and two end bays which duplicated the two originals) and adding a story to the top. In the process, he converted the originally offset arched entrance on the Milk Street facade to a window, and replaced the earlier heavy, bracketed stone cornice with a lighter copper one (which is now missing). This addition matched the original scrupulously, in terms of material, style, and ornament, so that there are now no noticeable seams separating old from new construction. The addition did, however, alter the building's overall proportions, making it appear blockier and less columnar.

Contemporary references to the building's style describe it as "a combination of Renaissance and Romanesque", or, more simply, "Roman Renaissance", although to the modern eye the 'Renaissance' or Beaux-Arts elements clearly predominate. The five arcaded two-story window bays on the bottom floors of each of the three dressed facades form the building's base. These are separated by modified Corinthian pilasters and punctuated at the top with baroque cartouches, and the section is topped with a projecting, molded string course. Due to a sloping grade towards Devonshire Street, the basement floor along that facade is at street level. Low entranceways decorated with ornate cast-iron grillwork at the Milk/Devonshire corner lead directly to this basement floor, where the safe deposit vaults were originally located.



The rectangular central entrance on Milk Street is topped by a heavy projecting Baroque pediment supported on paired consoles, flanked by large, arched windows with voluted keystones and relief-carved griffins in the spandrels. The oxeye windows in the center of the Arch and Devonshire Street facades are surrounded by foliate carving, and framed by large allegorical figures carved by the noted New York sculptor Max Bachman (whose most notable work was the series of allegorical figures on the Pulitzer Building in New York.)

The five-story shaft or main section of the building is divided into three horizontal segments. A bottom story of arcaded, round-arched windows with deep reveals and molded extrados is clearly derived from the work of H. H. Richardson. The middle three-story segment is composed of three bays of multiple windows separated by foliate relief-carved spandrels, and framed within carved, molded surrounds. A top story of rectangular windows separated by paired colonettes has wider, panelled divisions which continue the lines of the bay separations below. The entire section is capped with a rinceau-carved frieze, and is framed in on the Arch and Devonshire facades by small, rectangular windows set into wide stone piers at the ends of each floor.

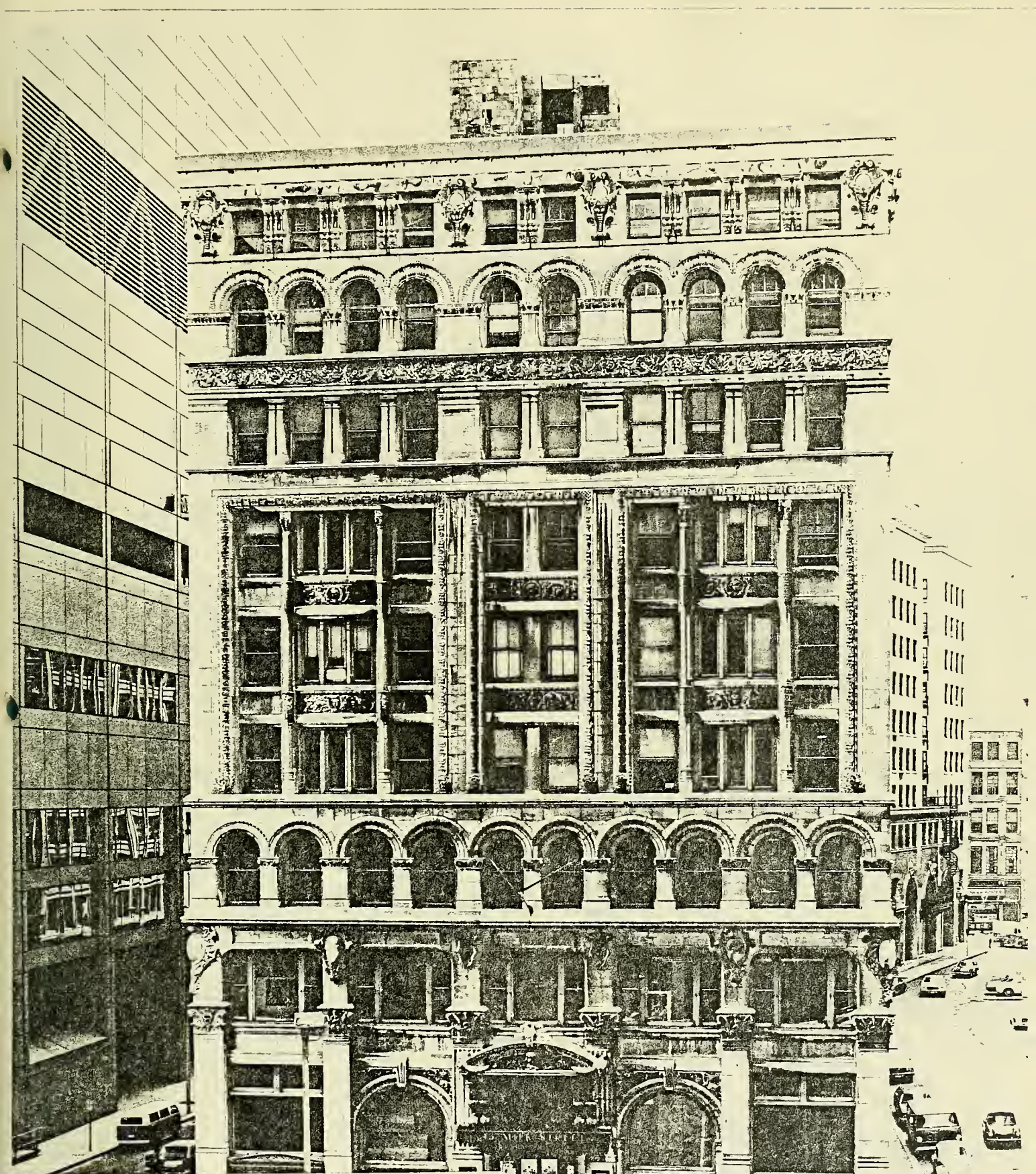
The bottom story of the two-story section repeats the arcaded floor of round-arched windows below, except that the intermediate pilasters are fluted and, again, wider separations continue the window bay divisions below. The added top story is composed of small, rectangular windows divided by paired consoles which mirror those in the entrance pediment. The window bay divisions are marked on this floor by high relief cartouches which, like much of the carved decoration, derive from the Beaux-Arts tradition. The light color, smooth finish, and tight mortar joints of the stone facing are also evocative of Beaux-Arts monumentality and classicism.

### 2.3 Photographs: attached









INTERNATIONAL TRUST CO. BUILDING  
North (main) Facade

ERA Photo by Pierce Pearmain, July '77









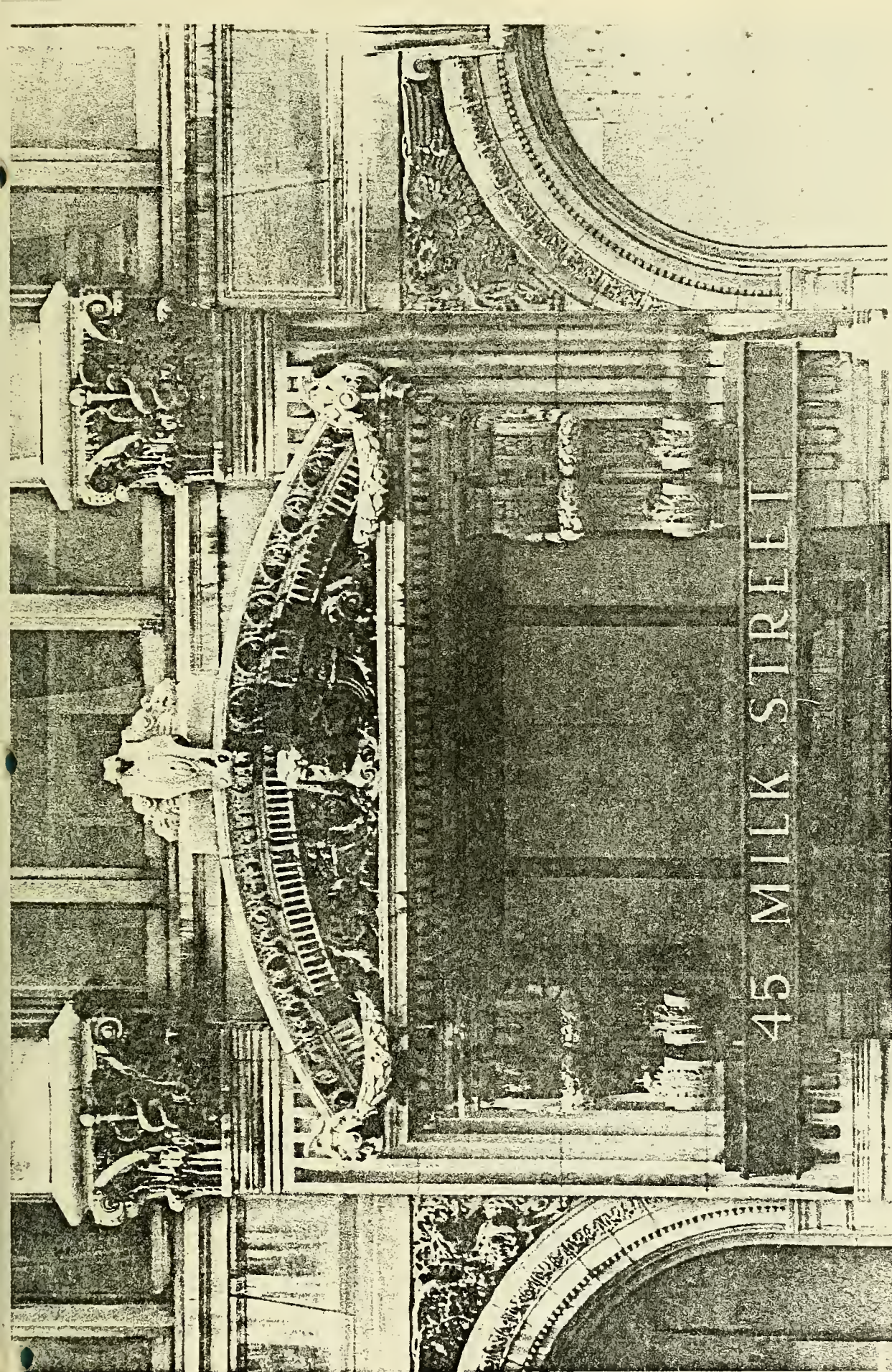
INTERNATIONAL TRUST CO. BUILDING  
North and East Facades

BRA Photo by Pierce Pearmain, July '77









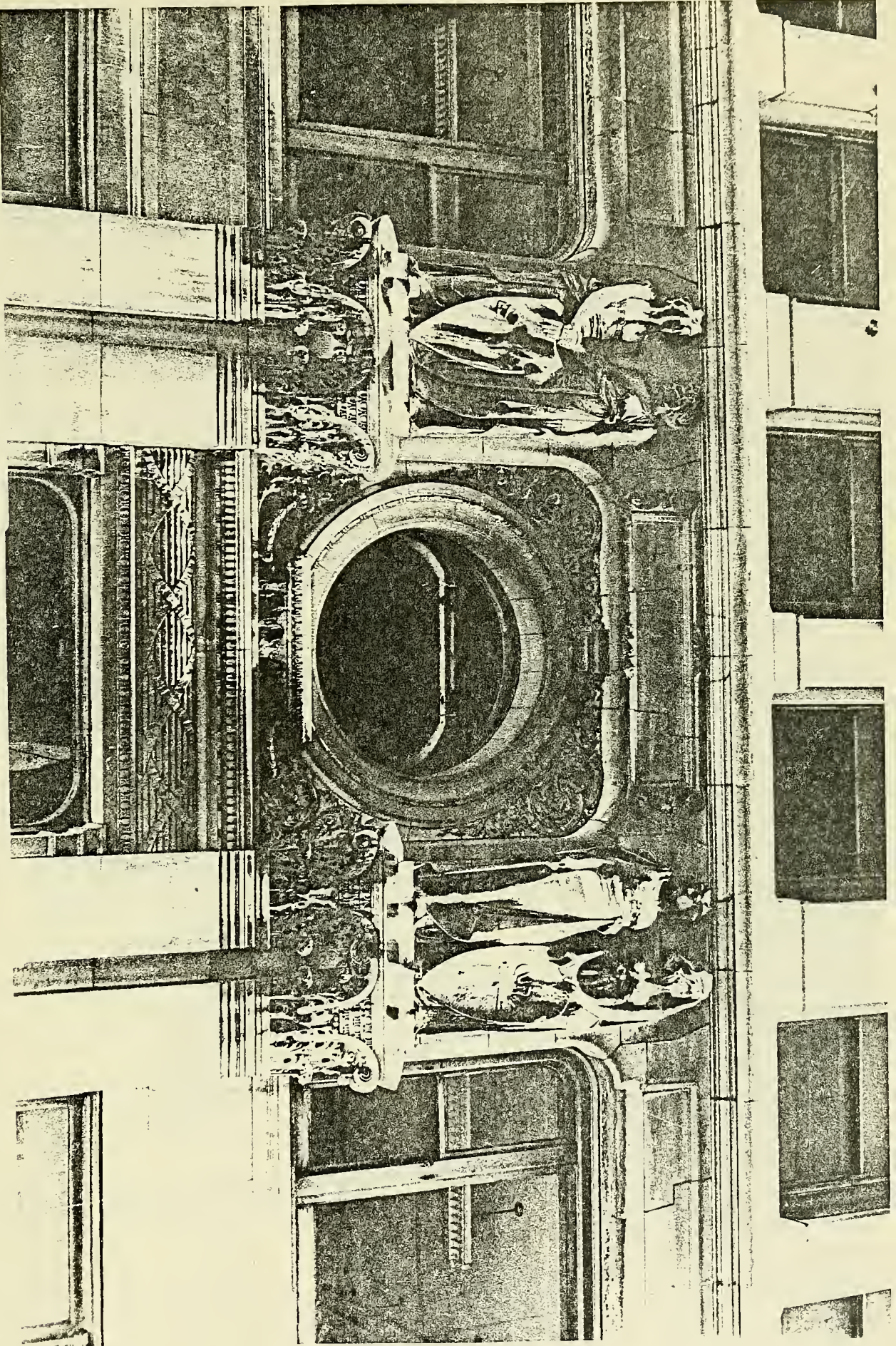
INTERNATIONAL TRUST CO. BUILDING  
Main Entrance Portal

BRA Photo by Pierce Pearmain, July '77







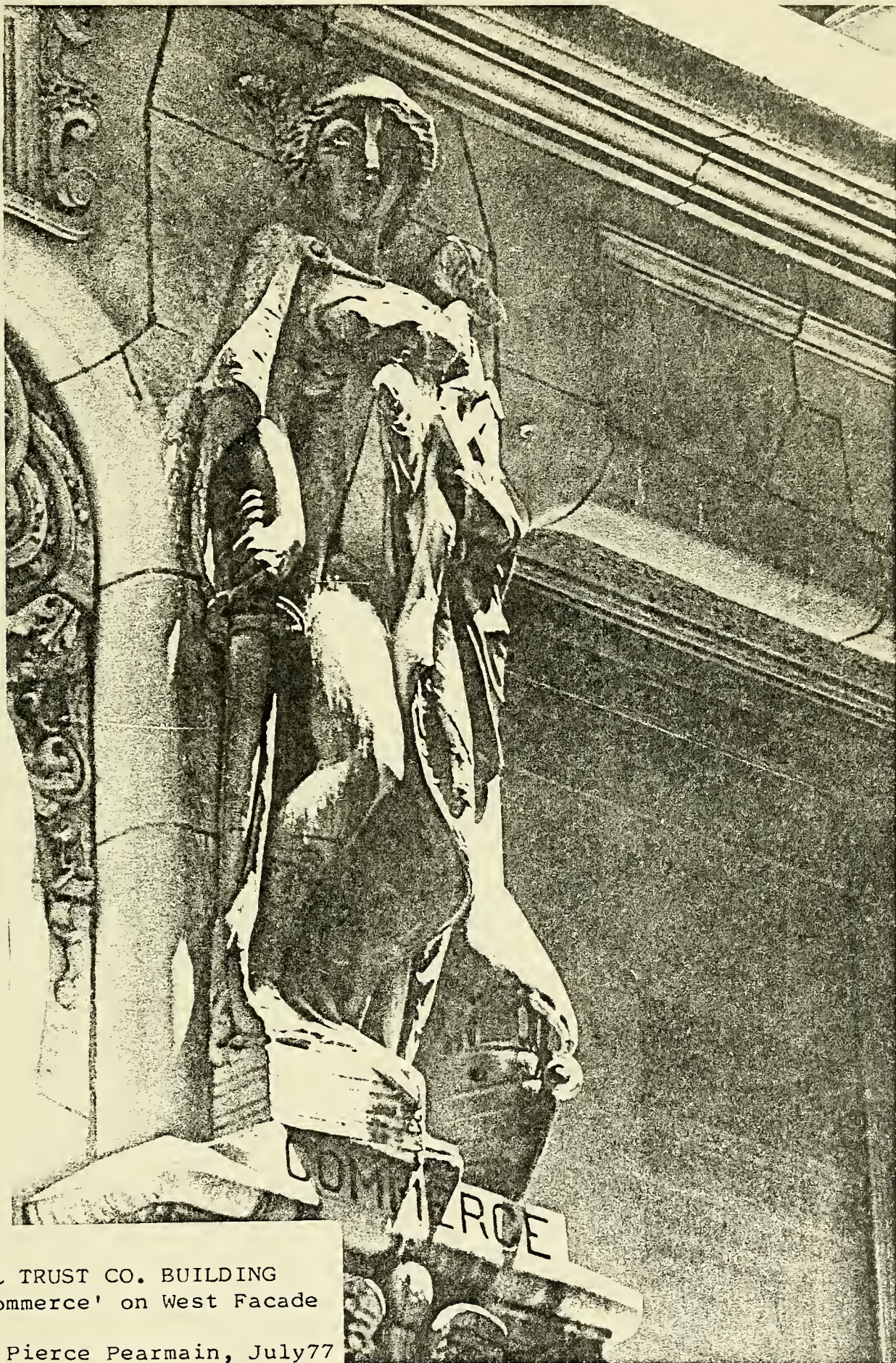


INTERNATIONAL TRUST CO. BUILDING  
Ornamental Sculpture on East Facade  
BRA Photo by Pierce Pearmain, July 77









INTERNATIONAL TRUST CO. BUILDING  
Figure of 'Commerce' on West Facade

BRA Photo by Pierce Pearmain, July77





### 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

#### 3.1 Historical Associations

The building's historical significance derives from its origin as the home office of a major New England trust company. As such, it reflects the growth of banking and finance in late 19th Century Boston, and the growth of the downtown business district, with consequent changes in land use.

The International Trust Company was founded in 1879, in the wake of Boston's rapid recovery from the Panic of 1873. Originally housed in a five-story building built shortly after the 1872 Fire, the firm's steady growth in the boom years of the 1880's and early 90's caused it to undertake the construction of a new home office on the same site, in 1893. By this time, the firm was among the four or five largest in New England, boasting combined assets of about 7 million dollars.

The firm's decision to build a major office building on Milk Street, three full blocks from the pre-fire financial center along State Street, was characteristic of the gradual southward movement of the Financial District in the last quarter of the 19th century. Milk Street had formerly marked the approximate northern boundary of the dry-goods district, which was now forced southward and westward toward the present-day Garment District.

Following the building's construction, the firm continued to grow, finding it necessary to enlarge its building by 1906. A series of mergers with smaller trust companies in the years following World War I placed it as New England's second largest trust company by 1923. In that year, a merger was announced with First National Bank (then, as now, New England's largest) in order "to provide the city with a banking institution comparable with the largest banks in the country". The consolidation, though it made First National the nation's fourth largest bank led to the extinction of the International Trust Company as an independent entity.





### 3.2 Architectural Significance

The International Trust Company building has significance in three areas:

1. As a major work of a prominent Boston architect.
  2. As an early Boston example of Beau-Arts office architecture.
  3. As an early example of proto-skeleton frame construction.
- 
1. The building's architect, William Gibbons Preston (1844-1910) studied for a short time at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. At first in association with his well-known father Jonathan, and later on his own, Preston designed major Boston buildings in the French Academic, Romanesque, Queen Anne and Renaissance Revival manners, including the Museum of Natural History (now Bonwit Teller), the oldest portion of the Hotel Vendome, the First Corps of Cadets Armory, and the Chadwick Lead Works. He also designed numerous Back Bay residences, demonstrating his facile command of the eclectic architectural vocabulary of the late 19th Century.  
  
The International Trust Company Building, designed in the latter part of his career, may be his earliest Beaux-Arts design and is certainly a major work of a prominent Boston architect.
  2. As an early example of Beaux-Arts facade treatment on a commercial structure, the International Trust Company Building anticipates the popularity of that style, especially for large-scale or public buildings, following the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Though it retains some elements of the previously popular Romanesque Style, the building possess a monumentality, a formality of facade organization, and an ornateness of detail which derive from the Beaux-Arts tradition and which mark it as a example of the 'mercantile classicism' which was soon to predominate in office architecture.
  3. The new method of building construction based on the steel skeleton frame, developed by the so-called 'Chicago School' of architects in the 1880's and in wide use there by 1893, had an enormous impact on the scale and design of American commercial architecture. Nevertheless, these advances were slow to catch on in traditionally-minded Boston. Thus the construction of the International Trust Company Building, combining the use of traditional load-bearing masonry walls with 'modern' (and still somewhat daring) reinforced concrete and steel framing, stands as an early Boston example of the use of these new methods and materials.





### 3.3 Relationship to the Criteria for Landmark Designation:

The International Trust Company Building clearly meets the criteria for Landmark designation as established by Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 in that it is of distinguished architectural design, embodying distinctive characteristics of construction and style which make it inherently valuable for study, and as a notable work of an architect whose work influenced the development of the city.



#### 4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

##### 4.1 Assessed Value

The total assessed value of the property is \$1,175,000.00, of which \$760,000.00 is for the land and the remaining \$414,000.00 for the building; hence current taxes are \$297,000.00.

##### 4.2 Current Ownership and Status

Presently owned by Frank Sawyer under title of Sixty-Five Bedford Street, Inc., the building has been vacant since late 1973. Though structurally sound, the building's roof is exposed to the elements due to alleged vandalism of the copper roof sheeting, and much interior plumbing has also been stripped.

The owner's application for a permit for 57 parking spaces on the site, necessitating the building's demolition, was denied by the City of Boston Air Pollution Control Commission. Although interest has been expressed in developing the existing property, to date no firm plans for the building's rehabilitation or reuse have been proposed.





## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 5.1 Relationship to Current Zoning

The International Trust Company Building is within a B-10 zone, permitting all standard commercial uses up to an allowable physical density (measured by the Floor Area Ratio, or FAR) of ten times the total site area. The present structure is near the ceiling of this FAR limit.

### 5.2 Current Planning Issues

Current planning philosophy for the Downtown Financial District is directed toward preservation and selective development; that is, toward promoting new economic and physical growth through conversion or redevelopment, designed in such a way as to be compatible with existing uses and structures. Specific planning objectives and planned activities for the area consist of the following:

- 1) Mixed-Use Development -- Development of the district as a 24-hour use area mixing residential, cultural, and other non-commercial activities with commercial uses is an objective for the area both to contribute to its vitality and to relieve pressure on the housing market in areas such as the North End and Chinatown.

The feasibility of creating new mixed-use space in currently under-utilized commercial buildings as well as in several potential development sites in the CBD is currently being explored. The BRA is currently involved in a study entitled, New Neighborhoods Downtown which is looking at the opportunity for converting Class C commercial space in older Downtown buildings to residential use.

- 2) Preservation -- Numerous precedents exist for the preservation of tax-exempt historic shrines in the downtown, such as the Old State House and the Old South Meeting House. However, beginning with the privately-financed restoration of the Old Corner Bookstore for office and retail use, increasing emphasis has been placed on generating revenue-producing adaptive re-uses for the CBD's significant historical and architectural assets. Recent examples of this include the Old City Hall and One Winthrop Square, which have been converted to Class A office use. Downtown buildings currently receiving such attention are 15 State Street, a Beaux-Arts office building being adapted for office and visitor center use by the National Park Service, and the old Shawmut Bank Building (designed by Shepley, Rutnan, and Coolidge in 1921) which is being renovated into Class A office space. The BRA's New Neighborhoods Downtown study is a further reflection of the concern for saving older downtown buildings through tax-producing re-uses.





- 3) New Office Construction -- New office construction on appropriate sites and of appropriate scale, height, and setback is being encouraged. Incentive zoning and design review are two tools used to insure compatibility of new construction with existing buildings. The limited availability of sites as well as a surplus of downtown office space have generally restricted the development options to several sites such as the Old Federal Reserve Building, which offer potential for conversion or new construction.
- 4) Revitalization of the Retail District -- Public improvements and private investment are being undertaken to support and reinforce the downtown shopping area. These improvements are designed to increase the volume of pedestrian and retail activity, and to minimize the impact of vehicular traffic in the area.

The BRA's \$12 million Downtown Public Improvement Program is designed to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems in the area, through a network of street re-alignments and resurfacing, sidewalk widening and re-paving, new lighting and street furniture, landscaped pedestrian plazas, and MBTA station improvements, as well as the planned construction of additional off-street parking.

In addition, the proposed mixed-use, Jordan Marsh/Lafayette Place development will provide new retail space which will reinforce the pedestrian-related retail character of the area.

Pedestrian improvements most directly affecting 45 Milk Street will be the planned sidewalk improvements along Arch Street adjacent to the building, and a new pedestrian plaza in Post Office Square.



## 6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

### 6.1 Alternatives

Both the significance of the structure and the language of the Commission's enabling statute, which precludes all but landmark designations in the central city, limit the designation category to that of Landmark.

The only alternative protection device would be inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, which would, if successfully pursued, afford a limited degree of protection.

The Commission also retains the option of not designating the building as a Landmark.

### 6.2 Impact of Alternatives

Inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, though it does not prevent a private owner from demolishing a building with his or her own funds does provide tax incentives for re-use or existing historic structures. The Tax Reform Act of 1976 prohibits both the deduction of demolition costs from Federal Income Taxes, and the use of accelerated depreciation for a new structure built on the site of former National Register property.





## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommend that the International Trust Company Building be designated a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, and that the property be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

The standards and criteria recommended for administering the regulatory functions provided for in Chapter 772 are attached.





## 8.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ward, David, "The Industrial Revolution and the Emergence of Boston's Central Business District", in Economic Geography Vol. 42, April 1, 1966
- Damrell, Charles S., A Half-Century of Boston's Building, Louis P. Hager, Boston, 1895, p.88, 316, 364, 370, 371, illus. p.460
- Giedion, Sigfried Space, Time, and Architecture Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1941 pp.322-332, pp.368-396 passim
- Englehardt, George W., Boston, Massachusetts Boston, 1897 illus., p.170
- Bacon, Edwin M., Bacon's Dictionary of Boston Boston, 1886 p.24
- Yearbook of the Bank Officers Association of Boston, Boston, 1916 p.99
- Professional and Industrial History of Suffolk County, Boston, 1894 Vol. 2, p.438
- American Architect and Building News, Vol. 39 p.14 p.889, Jan. 7, 1893
- American Architect, Vol. 15 No. 425 pp.75-76 Feb. 16, 1884
- Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Los Angeles, 1956 pp.486-7
- King's How to See Boston, Boston, 1895 p.60, illus. p.65
- Boston Globe Supplement on the Fire of 1872, Boston, 1972
- Herndon, Richard, Boston of Today, Boston, 1892 p.240 illus. p.31
- Boston Architectural Club Yearbook, Boston, 1908 illus.
- Winsor, Justin, ed. Memorial History of Boston, Vol. 4 Ch. 6 passim
- Boston City Directories, 1890-1917
- American Art Annual, Vol. 18 p.225 1921
- New York Times, Jan. 15, 1921 p.13 col. 4 (obit. of M. Bachman)
- Boston Transcript, June 19, 1919 p.22 Col. 6 (John M. Graham obit.)
- The International Trust Company, Boston, 1908 passim
- Boston Globe, May 26, 1923 (article on merger)
- Walton, Perry, Devonshire Street, Second National Bank, Boston, 1912



City of Boston, Tax Assessors Records

City of Boston, Building Department Records

Condit, Carl, The Rise of the Skyscraper, Chicago





## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### Boston Landmarks Commission

Per Sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for 1975), Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purposes of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation. The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers, and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them.

It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reasons for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been so structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.





It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, all of which are not under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- a) Building code conformance and safety requirements.
- b) Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems.
- c) Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels: (1) those general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (with three different categories for buildings, building interiors and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standards and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.



GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES  
DESIGNATED AS LANDMARKS by the Boston Landmarks Commission

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Imitation replacement materials are not allowed.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. New additions should be contemporary in design, not imitative of an earlier style or period.





8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered as part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. EXTERIOR WALLS

I MASONRY

1. Whenever possible, original masonry and mortar should be retained.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellant coating to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.
6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.





## II NON-MASONRY

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.
2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.

### C. ROOFS

1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
2. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, texture, and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers, brackets.

### D. WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
3. On some properties consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.



E. PORCHES, STEPS AND EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues and decorative items.

F. SIGNS, MARQUEES AND AWNINGS

1. Signs, marquees and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained and repaired where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees and awnings shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall either be contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structures being reused for purposes different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.





## G PENTHOUSES

1. The objective of preserving the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse shall be approved.
2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
  - a) Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; set-backs shall be utilized.
  - b) Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.
  - c) Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
  - d) Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

## H LANDSCAPE FEATURES

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its newer surroundings.





3. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

#### I. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. There are two aspects of exterior lighting:
  - a) Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b) Quality of illumination on building exterior.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches, as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a) Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b) Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.



- c) New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design, and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.

- 4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.

J. REMOVAL OF LATER ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

- 1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general guideline.
- 2. Factors that will be considered include:
  - a) Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
  - b) Historic association with the property.
  - c) Quality in the design and execution of the addition.
  - d) Functional usefulness.





## SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### INTERNATIONAL TRUST BUILDING

45 Milk Street, Boston

#### A. General

1. The intent is to preserve the overall character of the building; its mass in the definition of city block, street, and sidewalk; and its richness of detail.
2. Since the building is currently unoccupied, the Commission encourages exploration of uses, particularly a mixed use solution, that will contribute to the vitalization of the downtown in this prime location between the downtown shopping district and financial district.
3. Although the designation applies to the exterior of the building, the Commission encourages a use that will utilize the richness of materials and details that exist in the interior.
4. The elevations along Milk, Devonshire and Arch Streets shall be subject to all the guidelines for the buildings exterior.

#### B. Walls

1. No new openings shall be allowed in the masonry walls, nor existing openings removed or changed in size.
2. All detail, ornamentation and statuary shall be preserved.

#### C. Windows

1. Existing window openings shall be retained. Existing sash may be replaced where required, but where replaced shall be consistent for all windows of one size or level. Single lights shall be permitted as an alternate to double-hung, but in no case shall any additional mullions be included in replacements.
2. Window frames shall be of a color similar to or darker than masonry walls. Cast iron trim around window openings at ground level shall be retained and painted consistent with the color of window frames.
3. Windows may be converted to louvers if required for air handling system, but only at openings on ninth floor. If not all window openings are needed for ventilation system, then louver windows should be placed in symmetrical pattern.
4. The entrance canopy with street number and name, not original to the building, must be removed.



D. Penthouses

1. Penthouses visible from the streets approaching the building shall not be permitted.
2. Existing penthouses which do not meet criteria shall be removed.

E. Ornamentation

- 1 All original ornamentation, such as stone carving and statuary shall be preserved. New signage and lighting shall not obscure original ornamentation.
2. Metal grills at basement windows which are existing shall be retained if needed. Additional or replacement grills, if required for security purposes, shall be compatible with those original grills still in use.

F. Additions

1. No additions in height shall be permitted.
2. No additions or projections outside the building facade shall be permitted.





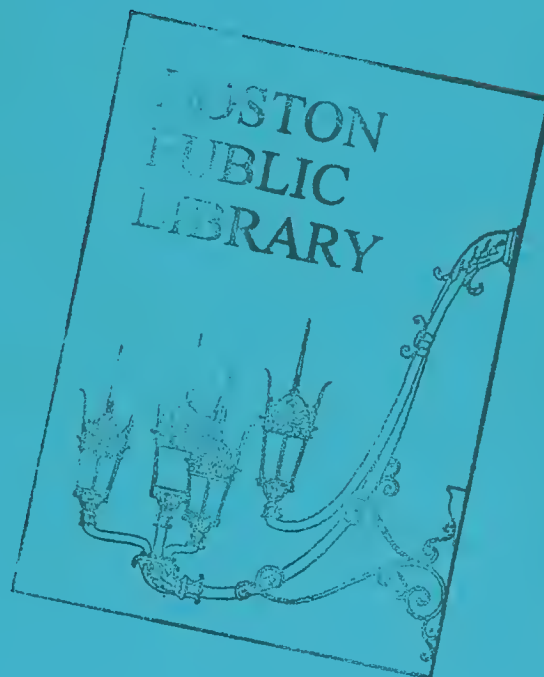
GOVDOC

BRA

4224

# Eustis Street Area

## District Study Committee Report



269  
B65L  
ESA



Boston Landmarks Commission



Report of the Eustis Street Study Committee  
on the Potential Designation of the  
EUSTIS STREET AREA  
as an Architectural Conservation District

Approved by Marcia Myers 1/6/81  
Executive Director Date

Accepted by Pauline Chisettanell 1/6/81  
Chairman Date





## Introduction and Summary

- 1.0 Location of the District
- 2.0 Description
- 3.0 Significance
- 4.0 Status of the Properties
- 5.0 Planning Context
- 6.0 Alternative Approaches
- 7.0 Recommendations
- 8.0 General Standards & Criteria
- 9.0 Proposed Specific Standards & Criteria
- 10.0 Bibliography



Note: Most of the descriptive material on the Eustis Street district including statements on the significance of the properties was exerpted from a report prepared by Ann Beha Associates and entitled: "Boston 350: A Preservation Education Strategy." A report by Marilyn Brockman entitled: "The Preservation of Buildings for Education: A Case Study in Lower Roxbury" also was used heavily without quotation. Both of these reports, in turn, relied on research conducted by Shirley Zavín, PhD.





## INTRODUCTION

The Eustis Street Study Committee hereby transmits to the Boston Landmarks Commission its report on the designation of the Eustis Street area as an Architectural Conservation District. The work of this committee was initiated by a petition to the Boston Landmarks Commission, asking that the Commission consider designating the area as an Architectural Conservation District under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975. The purpose of such a district is the recognition and protection of the architectural and historical characteristics which make an area unique.

As a result of the petition, and at the request of the Landmarks Commission, the Mayor appointed, and the City Council confirmed, a study committee to make recommendations to the Commission on the proposed district.

The committee, consisting of six local residents and five members of the Commission began working together in April of 1979, with the purpose of evaluating the architectural and historical significance of the area, the potential boundaries of an Architectural Conservation District, and the kinds of design guidelines which would ensure the protection of the area.

## SUMMARY

The committee has concluded that the Eustis Street Area is significant as a unique collection of sites and structures which represent a continuous history of Roxbury from its origins as a farming village through nineteenth century industrialization.

Therefore, the study committee has recommended that an area including the Old Roxbury Burying Ground, Cunningham and Doggett Houses, Eustis Street Firehouse and Nawn Factory be designated as an Architectural Conservation District and that an area surrounding that district and constituting an essential part of its environment be designated as a Protection Area.

The Committee further recommends that the Boston Landmarks Commission, rather than a district sub commission, administer the regulatory functions associated with the designations.

Design guidelines have been prepared which would serve to guide future physical changes within the Architectural Conservation District and Protection Area so that such changes would be compatible with the character of the area.

Local representatives on the Study Committee:

Byron Rushing  
Shirley Zavin  
Edward Blackman  
Thomas Welch  
William Burney  
Walter Banks

Boston Landmarks Commission representatives on the Study Committee:

Lawrence A. Bianchi  
Joan Goody  
Luix Overbea  
Margaret S. Smith (resigned)  
Carl Zellner



## 1.0 LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES OF EUSTIS STREET STUDY DISTRICT

### 1.1 The Study District

The area under consideration for designation as an architectural conservation district is located on Washington Street between Eustis Street and Melnea Cass Boulevard in the Dudley Square area of Roxbury. It is located in Wards 8 and 9.

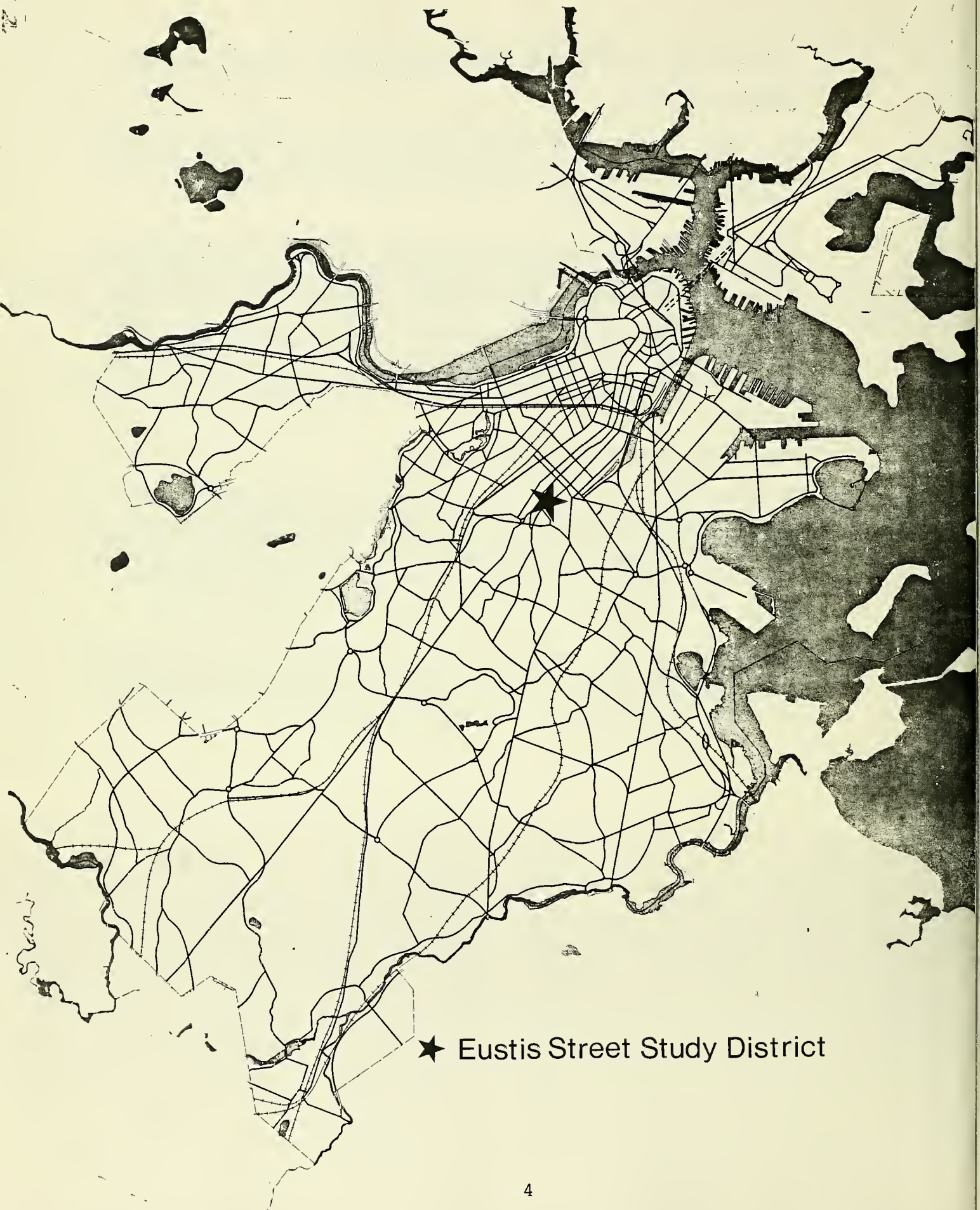
The original petition to designate the area as an architectural conservation district pertained to five contiguous properties: the Eliot Burying Ground, the structures at 2066, 2070 and 2080 Washington Street, and the former firehouse at 20 Eustis Street. (See figure 1.1) The study committee actually considered a somewhat larger area for designation in order to determine whether it would be possible to protect remnants of the old Roxbury Canal. Thus, the boundaries of the study district as extended by the study committee are roughly Washington, Eustis, Harrison Streets and the right-of-way of the new crosstown street, Melnea Cass Boulevard.

### 1.2 Area in Which the Study District is Located

The study district is part of the northern end of the Dudley Square area of Roxbury, a commercial area dominated by Dudley Station - a major transportation stop for the MBTA elevated transit and connecting bus routes. Commercial establishments in the area include small grocery stores, specialty shops, clothing and furniture stores and real estate offices. A large housing project is located to the southeast of the district.

Dudley Square, which contains a fairly cohesive group of late 19th century commercial buildings, is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Eustis Street Burying Ground and Fire Station are already listed on the National Register.





## 2.0 PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The study district comprises a collection of elements from nearly three centuries of Roxbury's history. The period from 1630 to 1890 covers, for the most part, a time in which Roxbury was a separate town.

The elements, which are identified on Figure 2.1, are, in order of age:

A. Old Roxbury Burying Ground (also known as the John Eliot Burying Ground), 1630.

The John Eliot Burying Ground, roughly a triangle with a rounded hypotenuse, lies at the corner of Washington and Eustis Streets, formerly the two main roads leading to Boston and Dorchester from Roxbury. Abutting it on the southerly tip is the former firehouse at 20 Eustis Street. The Burying Ground was once larger than its present size and extended some distance beyond the wall along its southeast side. A number of burials were discovered when the foundations were dug for the Eustis Street Firehouse. The last recorded burial occurred in 1846. The original lower Burying Ground walls were built of brick and stone, capped with wood. In 1842, a similar rear wall was built, extending from the firehouse to John Hunt's tannery, now the Nawn Factory site. In 1854, eight feet were taken from the Washington/Eustis Street grounds to provide a sidewalk. Two years later, a six-foot wall was constructed of Roxbury puddingstone with granite caps, and black wrought iron fencing and gate. This wall and fence still remains.

The cemetery contains approximately 500 grave markers and 25 underground tombs. Unlike other historic cemeteries in Boston, few of the stones were rearranged in the late 19th century's quest for symmetry and precision. The tombs are organized in two ranges, ten in the northwest half which are the oldest, and along the bordering wall twenty-seven more below-grade, of which three have large horizontal monuments over the graves. In 1882, a bronze tablet was placed on the entrance gate to commemorate famous people within.

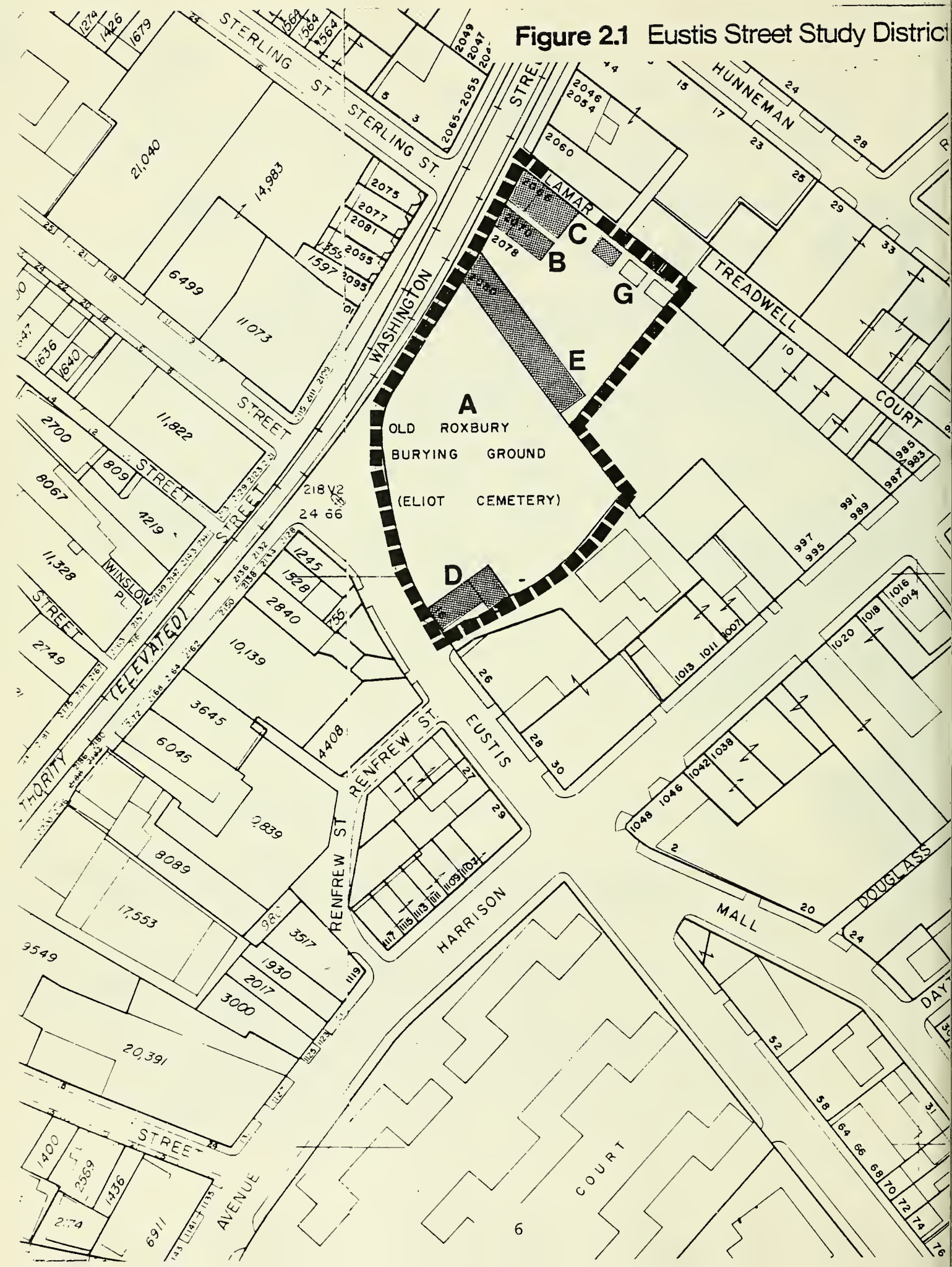
B. & C. Josiah Cunningham House, (ca. 1784 with 1867 storefront) and Jesse Doggett House and Tavern (ca. 1788 with 1888 storefront)

These two houses front on Washington Street, at numbers 2066-2070. Oriented end to the street and separated by a five-foot passageway, the houses are placed back-to-back in the western portion of their parcel. The front elevation of the Doggett House faces north, and the Cunningham House, south.

Both houses are two-story wood-frame clapboarded Federal style structures with hip roofs. The Doggett House is slightly larger than the Cunningham House (27 x 38 feet vs. 20 x 40); however, both are modest when compared to homes constructed in the vicinity by wealthier contemporary Roxbury citizens. The houses display typical Federal style features such as rectangular shape, central entry bays flanked by lateral pairs of windows, slender clapboard sheathing, and simple corner posts and cornices. Simple window framing and more elaborate door surrounds with plain classical details are common to both structures. Pairs of chimneys protrude from each back slope of the hip roofs.



### Figure 2.1 Eustis Street Study District



D. Eustis Street Firehouse (1859 with 1869 addition)

Designed by Roxbury architect John Roulestone Hall, the firehouse at 20 Eustis Street is a 2 ½-story brick building constructed in 1859 in the Italianate style. Contrasting granite is used in the round arched window and door surrounds with wood ornamental brackets under the wide eaves of the slate roof. The wood rear addition was constructed in a similar style in 1869 to house larger 'hook and ladder' equipment and a stable. Additional alternations were made in 1878 when the upper floor was converted to an apartment for the driver and a private "driver's staircase" attached to the south exterior of the brick building. In 1890 brick piers were placed under this wood addition.

The brick firehouse replaced a smaller 2-story wood Greek Revival firehouse (1829) which had a small (8'x9') cellar at its rear. The wood station was moved to Pike Street to be used as a residence, and the foundation was enlarged to accommodate the new structure. The cellar excavation uncovered numerous human remains, indicating that the small cellar had been built on an original portion of the Burying Ground. Prior to the wood firehouse a hearse house which served the Burial Ground had occupied the site. This too was moved to another location.

E. Owen Nawn Factory (ca. 1880)

Located at 2080 Washington Street at the northeastern edge of the Burying Ground, this large two-story brick factory was built around 1880 in the Italianate style. The simple cornice line, flat roof and simple segmentally-arched window and door surrounds lend the building a utilitarian simplicity appropriate to its commercial function. The cobblestone court which links the factory and the Cunningham and Doggett Houses was once a well used and busy place. Tenements occupied the site near the rear portion of the factory building. Josiah Cunningham's candlemaking shop and barn also fronted on the court. Maps indicate that the cobblestone passageway extended through to Harrison Avenue in the latter part of the nineteenth century and was known as Nawn Street due to the large number of buildings lining the street owned by Mr. Owen Nawn.

F. Davenport Office Building (ca. 1873)

Until recently, a small one-story brick structure was located one foot behind the rear wood addition of the firehouse. Built c. 1873, this one room building had decorative wood gable ends and large over-hanging eaves supported by decoratively incised rafters and a single large elaborate bracket at the top center of each gable end. At the time of this report, only the gable roof remains; the walls having been removed for the salvage of the brick.

G. Small Wood house at 1 Hunneman Place (ca. 1866-68)

#1 Hunneman Place is a small 2-story frame house measuring about 15' x 25' and running north-south. It has a gable roof with central stove chimney. The house was finished very plainly; its only decorative feature being the corner boards, fascia boards and 6/6 window sash. Clapboards form



the exterior wall covering. The rear shed, originally located in the north end of the west side, has been replaced by a recent, longer shed to the south, and a recent entry shed has been placed on the south part of the facade, probably covering the original doorway. Both of these modern sheds are of a temporary nature and have apparently done little damage to the house fabric. The sash, existing in four of the windows, appears to be original; there have been few exterior changes to the house.

### 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

#### 3.1 Historic Associations

The Eustis Street district is a unique collection of sites and structures which represent a continuous post-Revolutionary history of Roxbury's commercial and industrial development. To understand that significance, it is necessary to know the historical background of the site.

Founded in 1630, before the settlement of Boston, early Roxbury developed in the eastern corner of the town where the Burying Ground District is located. Most of the territory around the District is lowland and was once part of the tidewater marsh with streams and tidal inlets that separated Boston from Roxbury, Dorchester and Brookline. Until 1786, Boston was connected with Roxbury only by the Neck, a narrow strip of land along which Roxbury Street ran (now Washington Street).

Beginning as a farming village, Roxbury's economy was dependent on its crops and artisan trade, and the lowland along the Roxbury Neck was used primarily as pasturage and hay fields until the 1800's, with some residential and commercial structures clustered along the neck road.

During the Siege of Boston (1775-1776) the Americans built major fortifications across Washington Street, just south of the Burying Ground. Roxbury suffered great damage by bombardment during the Siege, and all buildings northward along the road to Boston from the Burying Ground were destroyed.

With the growth of Boston after the Revolution, the marshland along the neck was divided and sold for development. Because of its marsh characteristics, it was not as desirable for residential use as was Roxbury Highlands and Jamaica Plain, and the area developed as a mixture of residential and industrial buildings, initially built of wood and later of brick. Textile mills, ropewalks, a piano factory, Solomon Willard's clock company, lumber and stone yards appeared between Dudley Street and the Boston Line.

Industrial development was facilitated by the development of the Roxbury Canal, begun in 1795, which provided a convenient source of transportation to and from Boston Harbor and the waterfront. The canal followed an old streambed along what is now Harrison Avenue, to the east of the Burying Ground. Mr. Doggett, who owned the Tavern and bowling alley nearby, built a wharf on the canal approximately 170 feet north of the Tavern. The "canal house" built 18 feet south of the present Eustis Street Firehouse was used as a storehouse with boats coming up to the rear of the building. Rapid changes in transportation systems and the process of landfilling made much of the Roxbury Canal obsolete by 1820, and it was filled in piecemeal over a period of sixty years. As the centers of commerce and industry shifted away from this area, there began a gradual decline at the end of the nineteenth century that has culminated in the dilapidated district surviving to the present.

In 1868, Roxbury was annexed to Boston at the initiation of its residents, who hoped that the City would be able to provide much needed public improvements - including sewers to alleviate water problems in the low-lands.

### Old Roxbury Burying Ground

The John Eliot or Old Roxbury Burying Ground represents the earliest period in Roxbury's development.

Established in 1630, it is, with the King's Chapel Burying Ground and the Phipps Street Burying Ground in Charlestown, one of the three oldest cemeteries in Boston. The three oldest headstones date from 1653. Many of Roxbury's famous early citizens, including John Eliot (1690), minister of the First Church in Roxbury, and Apostle to the Indians, are buried in the Burying Ground. Later ministers of the First Church are also buried in a common parish tomb.

The Dudley Family tomb, including Governors Thomas and Joseph Dudley (1753 and 1780), Chief Justice Paul Dudley (1758) and Colonel William Dudley (1743) is located in the Burying Ground, along with the grave of Revolutionary War hero John Groaton. Josiah Cunningham (1798) and Jesse Doggett (1813), whose houses were built nearby, were also interred here.

A great many of the early grave markers are intact and represent the evolution of funerary art from the Puritan images of death and immortality, depicted by death's heads and angels, to classical motifs used in the Federal era and later.

### Cunningham and Doggett Houses

The Josiah Cunningham House, and the Jesse Doggett Tavern/House provide a visual record of Roxbury from the late 18th century to the 20th.

The land on which the houses stand was used for pasturage by its original owner, Deacon George Alcott, ancestor of A. Bronson and Lousia May Alcott. Horses were still grazing there when it was bought in 1784 by Josiah Cunningham, a housewright of rather modest means. The Cunningham "mansion house" appears to have been built soon after that. In 1787 an identically sized plot north of the Cunningham land was acquired by Jesse Doggett, a captain of the militia and perhaps a fireman; (his will contained 2 fire buckets). The architectural similarities between the two houses suggest that the Doggett house was built by his housewright neighbor. No other known extant examples of Cunningham's commissions have been found. As samples of the popular Federal style of the most modest and reduced sort, exhibiting basic elements of size, shape, and fenestration pattern and detail, the houses provide fine examples of artisan-class dwellings and offer an instructive contrast to the more sumptuous 18th century residences constructed by Roxbury gentry in "Roxbury Highlands" - in the vicinity of John Eliot Square.



Doggett's building originally served as his home and was also a tavern and bowling alley known by the sign of "The Ball and Pin." Its location on the well-travelled road between Boston and points south must have insured a steady supply of thirsty travelers, and the proprietors of the Roxbury Canal are said to have frequented the tavern regularly. That Doggett was well prepared to receive them is indicated by the "58 gallons of spirits" listed in an inventory made of his property at the time of his death in 1813. The bowling alley attached to the house was a very early example of an indoor alley, for the sport was at that time more often played outdoors. Doggett was apparently an enthusiastic promoter of the game for he installed additional bowling alleys in the buildings constructed by the owners of the Roxbury Canal on the east side of the Eustis Street Firehouse. On the north side of the property Doggett also constructed a wharf which was probably connected by a smaller waterway to the Roxbury Canal.

As this section of Roxbury shifted from an agricultural to an industrial area, the Cunningham House was sold to Jesse Brown who used it for his bakery (1821). The south half of the Cunningham lot had been acquired by Luther Morse, a soap-boiler in 1815; it was later sold to John Hunt, a morocco leather dresser, tanning being one of Roxbury's major 19th-century industries. The Doggett House remained in the possession of his heirs until 1866 when it was sold to Owen Nawn, a builder who also constructed the extant brick factory on the Cunningham lands about 1880. Numerous shed and commercial structures were placed on the original land holdings during the last quarter of the 19th century, and storefronts were added to the Cunningham and Doggett houses.

#### Eustis Street Firehouse

Dating from the middle of the nineteenth century, the firehouse reflects the urbanization of Roxbury and the increased role of the public sector in providing services. It also reflects changes in fire fighting methodology during the 19th century.

The firehouse is reputed to be the oldest standing firehouse (1859) in Boston. It served as the home of the famous W.C. Hunneman hand-engine "Torrent 6" that was familiarly called "Graveyard." Hunneman began as an apprentice to Paul Revere and later established his factory on Hunneman Street, where the Crosstown Street is currently located. The Hunneman Company was a world famous manufacturer of firefighting equipment; close to 750 engines were sent to all parts of the country and abroad before the company went out of business in 1883.

During the Great Fire of 1872 in Boston, the company from the Eustis Street Firehouse was called and served in the four day battle to control the fire. One member of the fire company apparently died in the effort.

The 1869 wooden addition to the firehouse coincides with the introduction of horse drawn equipment and hook and ladder apparatus. A part of this building served as a stable, and still retains hay doors and hay loft.



When, in 1878, the Boston Fire Department inaugurated the practice of maintaining a permanent residence in the City's firehouses, an apartment was installed on the second floor of the structure and an outside staircase was added to provide access to it.

The firehouse continued in use until 1916 when the Boston Fire Department's conversion to larger motorized equipment forced its closing. From 1926-1954 the firehouse was used as a meeting place by several Spanish-American War Veteran groups. They made a number of alterations in the interior, but the exterior remains relatively unchanged. In 1969 the Boston Parks and Recreation Department submitted a proposal to demolish the building. Opposition to the demolition was vigorous, and the Firehouse and John Eliot Burying Ground are now included in the National Register of Historic Places.

### Owen Nawn Factory

The factory building represents the completion of the transition of this section of Roxbury from a rural to an industrial area.

The site itself has had a long history of commercial use. By 1815 the Cunningham family had sold the land to Luther Morse, for a soap factory. Later, a large 2½-story wood factory with a gable roof was built on the site and occupied by John Hunt, a tanner or "morocco dresser," which at that time was one of Roxbury's most important industries. During the late 1860's, Owen Nawn, a building contractor and developer, acquired a number of properties in the area, including the factory site. He also bought land and constructed many houses in Roxbury and Jamaica Plain during the last quarter of the 19th century, thus contributing to the creation of what have been called "the streetcar suburbs." The Nawn Company was also one of the sub-contractors for the elevated railway begun at Dudley Station in 1901. The factory at 2080 Washington provides a strong edge and backdrop to the Burying Ground.

### 1 Hunneman Place

The small wood house at 1 Hunneman Place is the northernmost, and sole survivor of three wood houses which once stood on this short street. All three houses were located on Owen Nawn's property and were probably built by him for worker's housing between 1866, when he purchased the property, and 1868, when the houses first appear on the Sanborn Insurance Atlas.

The house is important as a rare surviving example of the modest wood-frame worker's housing typical of mid-nineteenth century Lower Roxbury. While dilapidated in appearance, it is in relatively stable condition for its age and building type, and retains most of its original features.

## 3.2 Conclusions

Each of the buildings and sites in the study district has its own individual identity and speaks in a unique way to the development of Roxbury. Coincidentally, the buildings and the cemetery they frame form a visually

cohesive whole, a distinct entity in the Dudley Square area. There are also some interesting thematic connections between them, such as Jesse Doggett having been a fireman and being buried in the cemetery near his house. But it is as a collection of artifacts from the various periods of growth at the Roxbury neck that the district is most significant. To be sure, this section of Roxbury was always a modest area, plagued by flooding and later by uncontrolled industrial growth. But the history is no less important than the history of more prosperous areas. And these historic resources, which tell an important story in Boston's history deserve the recognition usually afforded to more monumental structures.

#### 4.0 STATUS OF THE PROPERTIES

At the present time, the Eustis Street Firehouse and the Eliot Burying Ground are owned by the City of Boston, with the cemetery being under the care and control of the Parks & Recreation Department of the City. The Nawn Factory and the Cunningham and Doggett Houses are owned by the Department of Public Works of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

All of the properties are tax-exempt, and none are producing rental income.

The condition of the principal structures in the district is one of substantial deterioration. The Cunningham and Doggett Houses show more visible dilapidation than the other structures. However, a February, 1979 report prepared by the architectural firm of Ann M. Beha Associates described the condition of each property as of that date and concluded that "despite appearances, all of the buildings can be repaired, made safe, and fruitfully re-used" using conventional construction methods.

In addition to deterioration resulting from lack of maintenance, the properties in the study district are subject to two types of vandalism. One type is the kind of random destruction which is carried out, principally by juveniles, for the sheer excitement of it. Fortunately, this activity has been minimal in the study district except that some paint has appeared on the retaining walls of the cemetery.

The second type of vandalism is, in fact, thievery -- where scavengers steal building materials for their resale or reuse value. Within the year preceding the completion of this report, the Davenport Office Building, a small 1873 brick structure, has been demolished and the brick stolen. Only the roof remains.

Vandalism of each type is possible because of the easy access which vandals have had to the site. Without additional security measures, it can be expected that in time at least the wooden buildings will be destroyed by vandal-induced fire.

Several youth-oriented programs have taken place at the Eustis Street District in recent years. From May 1978 through August 1978, high school students from Boston Trade High School, Jamaica Plain High School and Dorchester High School employed by Y.E.S. participated in cleaning out the Cunningham and Doggett Houses and participated in an archaeological program behind these two houses. These activities were sponsored by a private non-profit organization known as BOSTON 350, Inc., with a grant from the Mabel Louise Riley Foundation. Supervision and training was supplied by the Museum of Afro American History. At the same time, students employed by the Youth Conservation Corps cleaned and mapped the Roxbury Burying Ground.

During the summer of 1979, BOSTON 350, Inc., sponsored another program with students employed by Y.E.S. in which the burying ground wall was repointed. The south wall of the Nawn Factory was also repointed. This program was funded by the State Department of Vocational Education.

An important element in the status of the Burying Ground is the condition of various stones and markers and the related issue of stone conservation. Besides willful vandalism, accidental damage from maintenance equipment does occur intermittently. The damage done by environmental factors is constant, but is more severe with some stone materials than is with others.

All of these cause the need for stone conservation. There are numerous conservation techniques and measures developed with varying degrees of success. Cities and towns in the region have undertaken cemetery restoration projects ranging from removal, reproduction and replacement of grave markers to very conservative projects in which certain types of stones have been treated in a long-term trial and observation project. In any cemetery restoration project, a city or town must accept Section 73A of Chapter 272 of the General Laws. This permits "community-sponsored, educationally-oriented, and professional-directed repair teams" to undertake restoration without the criminal violations otherwise in effect for removals of markers (Chapter 272, Section 73).



## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 5.1 Background

The Town of Roxbury was founded in 1630 and annexed to Boston in 1868. Roxbury village lay at the edge of the hilly farmland connected to Boston by a narrow neck stretching between Back Bay and South Cove. In the early 1800's, summer houses and country estates were built in the highlands by Boston's wealthy families.

The first major development was from 1840 to 1870 when less expensive versions of Boston townhouses and detached single- and two-family houses were constructed along Dudley Street. The majority of residential development, however, took place between 1870 and 1900 as streetcar service was extended to the area and the bays between Roxbury and Boston were filled. The steeper central highlands area, between Washington Street and Blue Hill Avenue, was developed less densely and became the home of the more affluent families. Houses increased in size as they approached Franklin Park. The surrounding areas were developed with more moderately-priced housing, such as three-deckers, especially around the turn of the century.

While Roxbury Highlands remained primarily an affluent residential district during the 19th century, Lower (northern) Roxbury became the site for light industrial uses and a residential district for the lower-middle income population, expanding into Roxbury. Jewish families moved into the southern area replacing earlier residents who were predominantly Yankees. At about the same time, black families first moved into the northern area.

During the 1940's and '50's, there was a significant migration of lower-income blacks from the South. In ten years, Roxbury completely reversed its racial composition from 80% white to 80% non-white. Today the composition remains relatively the same with increasing numbers of Spanish-speaking, Cape Verdean and West Indian families as well as black and white professionals. The influx of non-whites has had a significant effect on businesses with many now owned by minorities.

In the 1950's housing deterioration became evident in large sections of the district, although many areas, notably in Upper (southern) Roxbury, remained in good condition. By 1970, community leaders began work on a revitalization process for Washington Park and in 1963 Washington Park became the first residential rehabilitation project undertaken by the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

Although there is a dynamic middle-class group residing in Roxbury today, some sections remain severely affected by abandoned buildings, vacant lots and crime. The future of Roxbury can be portrayed as promising with a multiplicity of public and private groups and individuals working hard to preserve and maintain one of Boston's most diversified and exciting neighborhoods.

The section of Roxbury in which the proposed district is located is an area with diverse land uses: residential, industrial, commercial and recreational. The area's strength lies in the Dudley terminal area which is Roxbury's central business area. Other strengths include new housing developed by the Lower Roxbury Community Corporation, Campus High School, the new Occupational Resource Center, and the vast amount of vacant land in the Southwest Corridor where an industrial park is being developed by the City. The first tenant of this industrial park is the Digital Equipment Corporation, a nationally-known and growing data processing firm.

In spite of a current emphasis on industrial development in the area, there is a stable residential neighborhood on Williams Street to the west of Washington Street from the proposed district, and the former Berger Factory has recently been converted to housing units.

## 5.2 Specific Planning Issues

Several issues related to the resurgence of the Roxbury community will have direct effect on the proposed Eustis Street architectural conservation district. These are:

- o transportation -- crosstown street and replacement public transit service;
- o new development opportunities;
- o nearby vacant lots; and
- o vandalism.

### Transportation

The transportation-related issue most directly related to the Eustis Street district is the potential impact on the historic structures of the new crosstown street known as Melnea Cass Boulevard and located at the northeast border of the study district. The crosstown street was planned and built as part of the Southwest Corridor project, which will relocate the Orange Line of the MBTA along the right-of-way of the Penn Central railroad, and develop a new radial, arterial street as well.

The purpose of the crosstown street, which occupies the right-of-way of the cancelled "Inner Belt" or circumferential expressway, is to connect the Southwest Corridor to the Central Artery. It will also serve as a perimeter roadway to divert traffic from the south End, particularly Tremont Street and Columbus Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue.

The crosstown street, which includes two-way traffic in four lanes, is considered to be a major, general traffic street --meaning it is intended to carry both automobile and truck traffic. Because of the proximity to the new industrial park in the area, the street may turn out to be a major truck route.

In any case, the new street brings with it the potential for damage to the historic resources caused by vibration and exhaust emissions. These impacts on the properties should be monitored, and measures taken, if necessary, to protect these resources.

Relocation of the Orange Line rapid transit service from the elevated structure on Washington Street, adjacent to the proposed architectural conservation district, will reduce the effect of vibrations on the historic resources.

#### Development Opportunities; Zoning

Construction of the crosstown street has increased the development potential of a number of vacant sites which are in public ownership and adjacent to the new street. Development of these sites is being coordinated by the Southwest Corridor project. One site, located immediately to the west of the proposed district has been proposed for development of a supermarket. Other sites are being developed for industrial use. Current zoning for the study district itself is general manufacturing (M-1 and M-2). Across Washington Street from the study district the properties are zoned L-1 for local business; across Eustis Street the zoning is B-2 for general business.

The location of the Eustis Street district at a major intersection of Washington Street and Melnea Cass Boulevard and its prominence as a gateway to the Dudley Square area make it a pivotal site in planning for this section of Roxbury.



## 6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

The study committee has considered a range of alternatives for designation of the study district. These alternatives are:

1. designation of the study area as an Architectural Conservation District, plus designation of portions of the surrounding properties as a Protection Area;
2. designation of the study area as an Architectural Conservation District, but with no Protection Area designation;
3. designation of the Old Roxbury Burying Ground, the Eustis Street Fire Station, or both as Landmarks and the rest of the study area as a Protection Area; and
4. no action.

Also, the Committee can recommend renomination of the Cunningham and Doggett properties to the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as an expansion of the existing National Register Listing for the Burying Ground and Fire Station.

Effects of the different designation approaches to the study area and surrounding are as follows:

### 1. District Plus Protection Area

With such designation, all exterior changes visible from a public way to the properties in the Architectural Conservation District are subject to prior review by the Landmarks Commission. In addition, any changes within the Protection Area are subject to review as well, but in regard to only a few areas: demolition, land coverage, height of structures, landscape, and topography. Changes to buildings' details are not subject to review in a Protection Area.

Such a designation would protect not only the district proper, but its light, air, and views toward it from outside the district. This alternative presents the most comprehensive preservation mechanism, helping to guide new development along the new Crosstown Street so as to be reasonably compatible with the historic properties in siting and general massing.

### 2. District Only

A less comprehensive designation, this approach would protect the district itself but not its environment. By not involving owners of adjacent properties it might be a more politically expedient approach.

### 3. Two Landmarks Plus Protection Area

Individual designations are merited by one, or possibly two, of the elements in the study area: the Burying Ground and perhaps the Fire Station. The reason is that a landmark must be significant "to the City



and the Commonwealth, the New England Region or the Nation". Only those two elements appear to meet the criteria for landmark designation.

Designation of a Protection Area consisting of the remainder of the study area would provide protection in the form of review of demolition and new construction, but would not require review of modifications to the Nawn Factory or Cunningham and Doggett houses.

#### 4. No Designation

While the study committee has never seriously considered this alternative, the Boston Landmarks Commission has the option of not designating the properties.

The effect of expanding the National Register Listing would be to require environmental review of Federally-sponsored actions that might effect the additional properties listed. This process, under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, does not affect state, city or private projects that do not involve the use of Federal funds or licensing.

If the district is designated by the Landmarks Commission in the form described in alternatives 1 or 2, above, the Southwest Corridor project, which is being carried out by a state agency, would be subject to design review under the Landmarks Commission act. Thus, expansion of the National Register Listing would probably not in itself provide any further protection beyond an architectural conservation district designation. Also, since two elements of the study area are already listed, "106 Review" already is required for much of the district.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

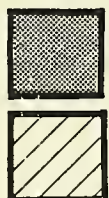
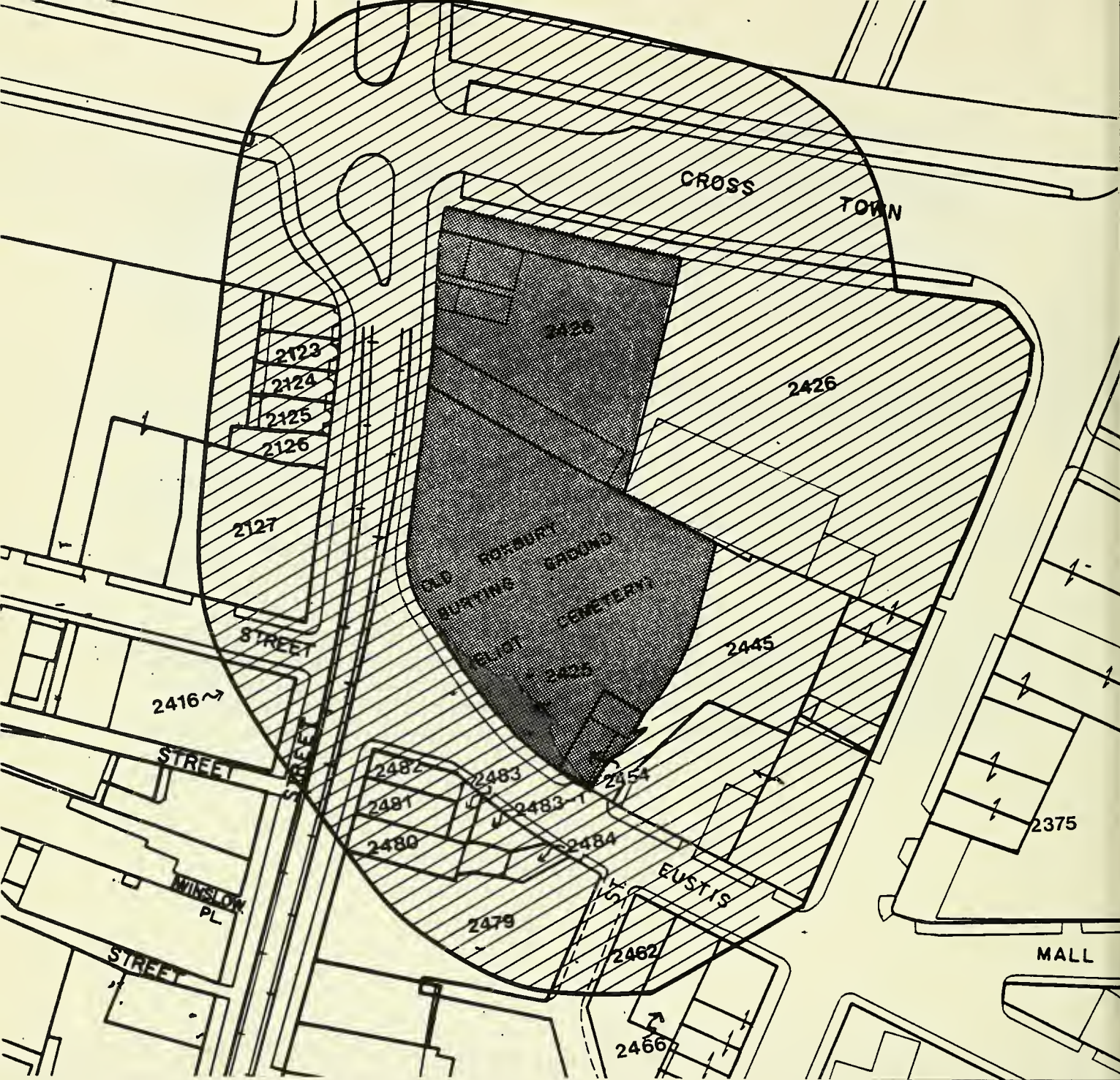
The Eustis Street district study committee recommends that an area encompassing the Old Roxbury or John Eliot Burying Ground, the Eustis Street Firehouse, the Josiah Cunningham and Jesse Doggett Houses, the Nawn Factory and 1 Hunneman Place be designated as an Architectural Conservation District. These properties are located at 2066-2080 Washington Street, the northeast corner of Eustis Street, and number 16-20 Eustis Street. They represent assessors parcel numbers 2425, 2454 and roughly half of 2426 (21,022 sq.ft.)

Additionally, the study committee recommends that an area surrounding the Architectural Conservation District be designated as a Protection Area. This Protection Area would consist of the remaining parcels in the block bounded by Washington Street, Eustis Street, Harrison Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard (which are assessor's parcel 2445 and the rest of parcel 2426); and all property existing within 150 feet of the Architectural Conservation District. See the attached map for clarification.

Recommended standards and criteria for administering the districts are also attached.

Because by statute, a district sub-commission's local representatives must be owners or residents within the district, and for this district there are no private owners or residents, a district sub-commission may not legally be appointed. Thus, the study committee recommends that the full Boston Landmarks Commission administer design review for both districts.





Eustis Street Architectural Conservation District

Eustis Street Protection Area



0 100 200 300 400 500 feet

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## 8.0 GENERAL STANDARDS FOR PROPERTIES IN DISTRICTS DESIGNATED BY THE BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION

The intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve the existing qualities that brought about the designation of the district.

As intended by the statute, a wide variety of districts are eligible for designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some districts of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value that are designated as Landmark Districts will permit only minor modifications, while for some other areas, designated as Architectural Conservation Districts, the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with existing features.

In all cases, the design approach to a proposed change in a district should begin with an understanding of the fact that the overall character of a district is greater than the sum of its parts, and that a pattern exists within a district, which is made up of each building, each landscape element and each detail. It is this aggregate character which is most important.

Additions and new construction should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of an individual building or of the district. The size, scale, color, material and character of this work should be compatible with the character of the existing buildings and their environment. The design should be contemporary and not imitative of an earlier style or period of architecture.

In the design of alterations, which may have a less significant impact than additions or new construction, one should, whenever possible, retain or repair existing materials and features, rather than remove and replace them.

When it is necessary to replace such materials or features, replacement should, whenever possible, be based on physical evidence, or evidence contained in documents such as plans and photographs indicating the appearance and other characteristics of the materials or features being replaced. New materials used in replacement should, if possible, match the materials being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities.

Careful evaluation should be made as to the nature of changes which have occurred over time to a building or the district as a whole. These changes are a part of the history of the area and may be significant in their own right.

In general, proposed changes which are easily reversed are far less serious than those which are irrevocable.



## 9.1

# Eustis Street Architectural Conservation District

## GENERAL STANDARDS

The principal goal of the Eustis Street Architectural Conservation District is to conserve a section of Roxbury's physical fabric for its potential as an educational medium. The burying ground and adjacent buildings constitute a tangible example of the transition of the built environment from the 17th to the 19th century in Roxbury... all within less than one square block. Already this area has been used to introduce young people to architectural history, historic archaeology and historic building maintenance. The Museum of Afro American History and the Roxbury Historical Society are enthusiastic about developing this area for its pedagogical opportunities.

Therefore, the following general standards are recommended for administering the district:

1. In general, it is the intent of the designation to encourage the restoration of the exterior of the buildings in the Architectural Conservation District.
2. Demolition of structures and/or the removal of original architectural fabric will not generally be allowed unless advanced deterioration makes a structure or its elements unusable. If permitted, demolition or removal must be done for educational purposes and as recorded dismantling, the documentation of which must be according to the standards of the Historic American Building Survey, and the plan of which must be approved by the Boston Landmarks Commission.
3. In general, archaeological research may be carried out if conducted by the Museum of Afro American History or such other qualified institution as the Commission deems appropriate.
4. On all portions of the district except the burying ground, archaeological research must be performed prior to any disturbance of the district. No dig may be carried out in the burying ground.
5. New construction is not prohibited in district, but will be carefully reviewed to ensure that the design of such construction is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of existing structures. Modern design is preferable to attempt at historic reproduction.

6. New construction is not allowed:
  - a. in the burying ground;
  - b. anywhere, if an archaeological investigation is not performed prior to construction.
7. Any new lighting planned for the district must be pedestrian in scale, and use white light, not red-orange or other vapor lighting. Fixtures may be modern and unobtrusive in design, but an accurate historical reproduction of light fixtures will be considered for possible approval. Gaslight fixtures not using gas lights are not allowed.
8. Sidewalk reconstruction must use brick as a surface on Washington and Eustis Street, set in sand and not mortar. Driveways and other vehicle access restored or added must use cobblestones or Belgian Blocks. The existing cobblestone passageway must be retained, existing cobblestones uncovered and gaps filled with stones to match.
9. Access for disabled persons to all elements of the district must be carefully designed to minimize effect on the historic elements of the district, within standards for handicapped access as provided from time to time by governmental bodies.
10. Systems for alternate energy collection or use must be carefully designed to minimize effect on historic elements of the district.
11. Under no circumstances will abrasive cleaning methods be allowed for any element portion of the district.

## SPECIFIC STANDARDS

### OLD ROXBURY BURYING GROUND

1. In general, the appearance of the burying ground should reflect the 18th century, the period of its greatest use.
2. Headstones, Markers, Tombs
  - a. Headstones may not be relocated.
  - b. Repair or restoration of headstones will be allowed only if the specifications for repairs are approved by the Boston Landmarks Commission.
  - c. Partially buried headstones may have the turf around them removed only if the specifications for work to be done are approved by the Commission.
  - d. Gravestone rubbing is discouraged but as an activity is not subject to review by the Commission.

3. Ground Cover And Topography

- a. Except for uncovering headstones, no change in topography in the burying ground will be allowed.
- b. Existing trees may be removed only if diseased beyond cure.
- c. Material for all path work shall be gravel.
- d. Planting of new trees will be subject to review by the Commission.

4. Wall and Fences

- a. The existing iron fence must be retained in its entirety. The only acceptable paint color is black.
- b. Repairs and pointing of the stone wall must use materials and mortar matching the original mortar and puddingstone. Use of mortar with Portland Cement or other modern materials is not permissible.
- c. When repairs are necessary to the stone wall fronting Eustis and Washington Streets, such repairs must follow specifications approved by the Commission to avoid drainage problems and other possible causes of the structural damage.
- d. The bronze plaque at the entrance gate must be retained. If for any reason the plaque is irretrievably lost, any new plaque should, if possible, match the original in design and color.

5. Lighting

- a. Illumination should be adequate so that it contributes to the safety of the cemetery.
- b. Lighting fixtures should be selected with the approval of the Commission.

6. Miscellaneous

- a. Any decoration of graves for national holidays or other reasons should respect the 18th century character of the cemetery, but is not subject to review by the Commission.
- b. Cutting of grass must not damage headstones or other historic elements. The use of power mowers, which have damaged the stones in the past, is discouraged, and the use of nylon line grass cutters is encouraged.
- c. No construction or addition of any elements, except as specified above, is permitted.



## EUSTIS STREET FIRE STATION

### 1. Form

- a. In general, the form of the building as it existed after the 1869 wood addition must be retained.
- b. The wood addition may be removed only if it is determined that it is too deteriorated to be repaired. Removal must follow standards provided in the General Standards & Criteria, Section 1.
- c. The side staircase may be retained if desired, or removed.

### 2. Facades

- a. The brick of the original building must be retained. Any necessary repair or pointing must use materials exactly matching the original. The joint profile should relate well to the nineteenth century character of the building. An attempt will be made to match the original mortar as found on the building.
- b. Abrasive cleaning techniques are not permitted under any circumstances. Waterproofing or water repellent coatings to the above-ground masonry are not allowed unless a particular problem requires their use; in this event, the Commission must review the specifications.
- c. The masonry walls may not be painted.
- d. Paint colors for trim and wooden additions will be subject to review by the Commission.

### 3. Roof

- a. The shape of the original roof must be retained. If necessary, the stair penthouse on the wood addition may be removed.
- b. The original roof covering may be changed as necessary to provide a permanent weather-tight seal. New slate must match the slate as closely as possible.
- c. All cornices, brackets and other decorative elements must be retained. New brackets must exactly match the existing brackets in shape and material.
- d. Gutters may be repaired or replaced as necessary. Replacement gutters may be made of wood or another acceptable material.

### 4. Doors and Windows

- a. The original main entrance to the fire station in any rehabilitation to the building's front facade, must be re-designed to respect the original door opening.



- b. Bricks blocking part of the entrance may be removed. A new door must be carefully designed to match, as closely as possible, original or period fire station doors. A smaller door for normal use may be inset within the larger fire house door.
- c. The existing fenestration must be retained. Window openings may not be changed in size. Existing sash shall be repaired and retained, unless deterioration is advanced. In such a case, wood replacement sash matching the original must be used. Storm windows are allowable as reversible change. Their installation will be reviewed for color selection. The use of interior storm windows may be considered.

#### 5. Other Exterior Architectural Features

- a. The exterior staircase on the fire station's south facade should be retained, or be re-designed to approximate the designs shown in documentary photographs.
- b. Any new signs must be reviewed by the Commission.
- c. The existing Veteran's sign may be removed.

#### JOSIAH CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - JESSEE DOGGETT HOUSE AND TAVERN

These structures with their similar styles and alterations, should, if possible, be treated similarly. The general effect of changes to these buildings should be restorative to mid-19th century or earlier appearance.

Demolition is allowed for those structures only in the case of advanced deterioration and in conjunction with a program of education and documentation. Any demolition must meet the standards in the General Standards & Criteria. Unusual architectural features and representative samples of original fabric should be conserved for educational purposes.

Any new materials used in restoration must match original materials as closely as possible. Deteriorated material or architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced or removed, in order to maximize the amount of original fabric to be retained.

Additions, such as the storefronts, are evidence of the history of the buildings. These changes have developed significance in their own right, and this significance must be recognized and respected.

Paint colors, if not determined by scientific paint analysis, must be selected from a carefully researched palette of colors appropriate to the buildings.

#### 1. Form

- a. The general form of the buildings must be retained.

- b. The storefront additions shall be retained, unless a plan for historical interpretation on the site requires their removal. Demolition must meet the Standards in the General Standards & Criteria.
- 2. Facades

Repair to the wood clapboards must match the original existing clapboards as closely as possible.
- 3. Roofs
  - a. The integrity of the original roof line of both the houses and storefronts must be retained.
  - b. To the extent possible, shingles, flashing, and drainage should be retained and repaired using materials that match the original as closely as possible. If no evidence exists of original material, new materials to be used must be appropriate, based on thorough research and documentation.
- 4. Windows and Doors
  - a. Existing windows and doors must be used in any rehabilitation, if salvagable.
  - b. Replacements for deteriorated windows and doors must match original in sash and pane configuration, panel configuration, and materials.
  - c. Storm windows and storm doors must be unobtrusive and of a design sympathetic to the design of the buildings.
- 5. Signs
  - a. Signs will be subject to review by the Commssion.
  - b. Signage on the storefronts must conform to style and size of historically-documented signs previously on the storefronts.
  - c. Free standing signs will be considered.

#### OWEN NAWN FACTORY

The general approach for this building is to protect its integrity as currently existing, reflecting the period of the building's construction and early period of use.

##### 1. Form

The general form of the building must be retained.

2. Facades

The brick facades must be preserved. Repointing and other masonry repair must use bricks and mortar matching original fabric as closely as possible. Under no circumstances may brick surfaces be painted or covered. Abrasive cleaning methods are not permitted.

3. Roofs

The general shape of the existing roofs must be retained. Additions may be considered if they enhance the educational function of the building and do not result in irreversible changes. Repair to the roof must use, where visible, materials matching original fabric closely as possible.

4. Windows

- a. Window openings shall not be enlarged or framed down, nor permanently closed except for special circumstances - in which case the treatment will be reviewed by the Commission.
- b. Sash should be retained and repaired, if salvageable. New sash and storm windows will be considered by the Commission.

Signs

Signs will be subject to review by the Commission.

## 9.2

# Eustis Street Protection Area

## GENERAL STANDARDS

As provided in Section 4, St. 1975 c.772, the only areas subject to Design Review in a Protection Area are:

Demolition;  
Land Coverage;  
Height of Structures;  
Landscape; and  
Topography.

The goal of the Protection Area is threefold: to protect views of the district, to ensure that new development adjacent to the district is architecturally compatible in massing and height and to protect light and air circulation within the district. The study committee is also concerned that development within the Protection Area should not pose a physical threat to historic resources; for example, through emissions and vibrations.

## SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### 1. Demolition

- a. In general, demolition of structures in the Protection Area is allowed.
- b. Prior to any demolition the Boston Landmarks Commission should determine whether the buildings must be recorded in a manner to meet professional architectural survey standards as the Commission may from time to time establish.

### 2. Topography

No changes in topography are allowed within the Protection Area.

### 3. Landscape

In general, landscape changes within the Protection Area must not obstruct views of the elements of the attached Architectural Conservation District from any public ways within the Protection Area.

### 4. New Construction

Ground disturbance in the Protection Area will be subject to an impact study for effects on archaeological resources. If such resources are found, a plan will be developed to mitigate adverse effects.



New construction or additions to existing buildings may not increase shadows within the architectural conservation district nor block vistas to the district along public ways within the Protection Area.

New buildings may be no higher than 60 feet - except that additions or penthouses higher than this level that are not visible from the district or do not block sunlight to the district are allowed.

## 10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

The historical information contained in this document is drawn from numerous sources and compiled by Shirley Zavín, Ph.D., as part of her original historical research on the site. As such, sources are varied, and further analysis and information is available. The following sources were used in the historical documentation of the district.

### Books, Pamphlets, Records

Beha, Ann M., Associates, BOSTON 350: A Preservation Education Strategy, Boston: 1979.

Brockman, Marilyn, The Preservation of Buildings for Education: A Case Study in Lower Roxbury. Boston: 1979.

Drake, Francis S., Town of Roxbury, vol. 34 of Boston Record Commissioners Report. Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1908.

Drake, Francis S., "Roxbury in Colonial Times," from Winsor, Memorial History. Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1880-81, 4 vols.

Drake, Francis S., "Roxbury in the Last 100 Years," from Winsor, Memorial History. Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1880-81, 4 vols.

Drake, Francis S., "Roxbury in the Provincial Period," from Winsor, Memorial History. Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1880-81, 4 vols.

Ellis, Charles, History of the Town of Roxbury.

May, Henry, "The First Burying Place in Roxbury," Cemetery Dept., City Document No. 8, pp. 39-55.

Minutes: Roxbury Canal Proprietors, Oct. 5, 1775 - June 21, 1825.

Museum of Afro American History; "Report on the Archaeological Excavations at the Doggett and Cunningham Houses, Roxbury, MA, 1978, Beth Bower, staff archeologist.

Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Books, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 47, 48, 50, 53, 57, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 71, 72, 167, 342.

Roxbury Town Records, Records of the City of Boston, 1648-1849, Reels 204-216.

Suffolk County Deeds, Books 5, 55, 139, 160, 161, 163, 168, 236, 261, 278, 280, 282, 1426.

Woods, Robert A. and Albert J. Kennedy, The Zone of Emergence: Observations of the Lower Middle and Upper Working Class Communities of Boston, 1905-1914. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1969.

### Maps, Plans, and Atlases

Bromley Co., Atlas of Boston, 1884 and 1890.

Crafts, N. Henry, Plan of Boston and Roxbury, 1867.

Engineering Department, City of Boston, Eliot Cemetery, Roxbury, July 1900.

Hales, John G., Map of the Town of Roxbury, April 1832.

Peiham, Henry. A Plan of Boston... with the Military Works Constructed in the Years 1776 and 1778.

Pope, John, Boston/Roxbury Line in Area of Lambs Dam that had become obliterated, 1786.

Sanborn Co. Insurance Atlas of Boston, 1932.

Walling, Henry, Map of Boston, 1852.

White, John, A Plan of the Burying Ground in Roxbury, May 18, 1785.

White, John, Plan of a Townway leading from the road by Doctor Williams House to the Town Landing in Col. Lamb's Dam, 1786.

Whitney, Charles, Plan of an estate in Roxbury, belonging to the heirs of the late Jessee Doggett, May 1847.

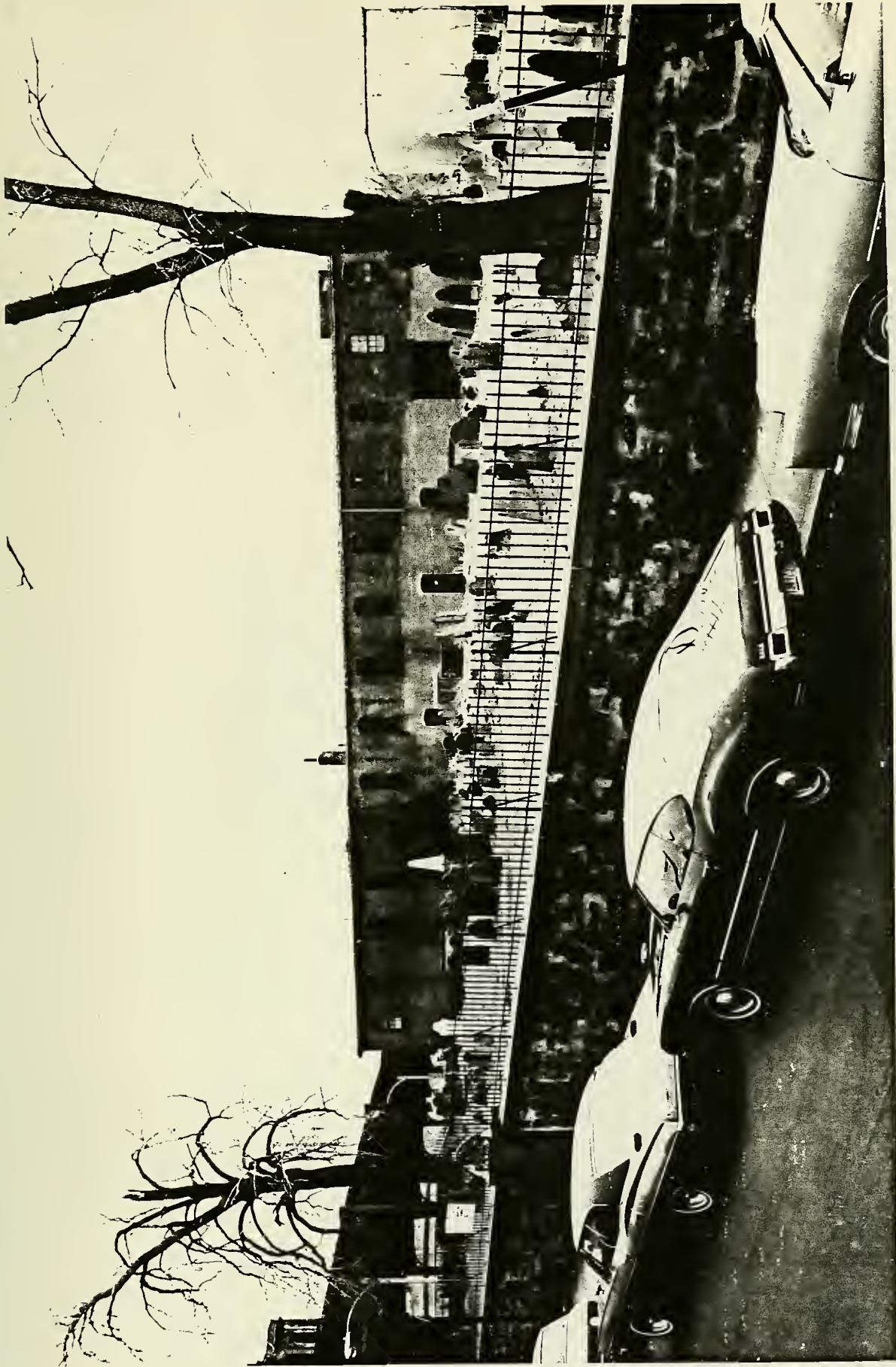
Withington, Mather, Plan of a Farm lying partly in Roxbury and partly in Boston; formerly the old "Lamb Farm" belonging to Charles Davis and Others, surveyor, Sept. 1819.

Woodward, L.F., Eustis St. Cemetery, Aug. 2844.

### Photographs

Collection of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.





Old Roxburying Ground &  
Owen Nawn Factory







Jesse Doggett House & Tavern  
2066 Washington Street



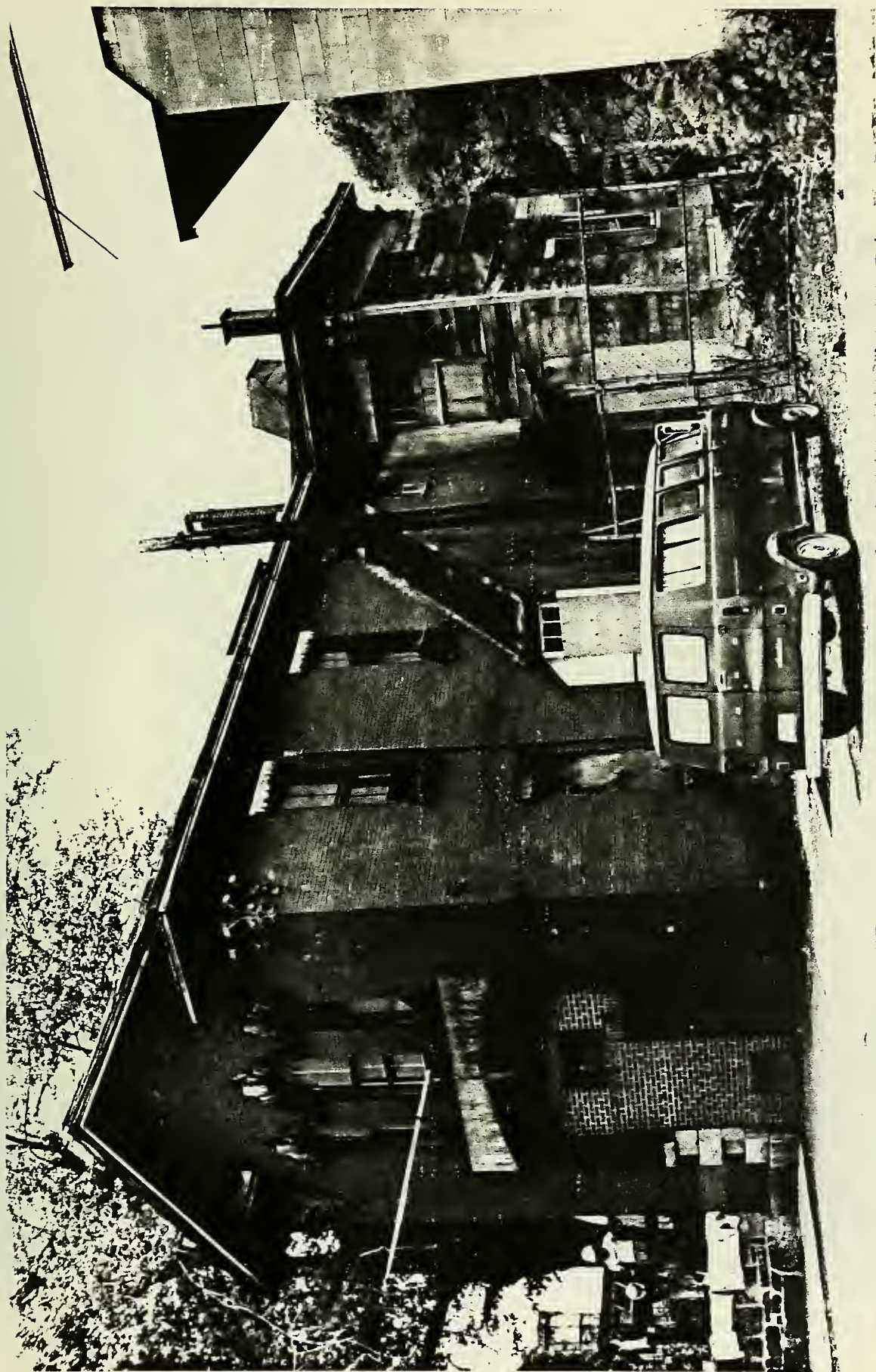




Cunningham & Doggett Houses  
2066 & 2070 Washington Street







Eustis Street Firehouse  
20 Eustis Street





Eustis Street Firehouse  
20 Eustis Street







Owen Nawn Factory  
2080 Washington Street





C69

B65L Au

The Austin Block







